

THE BOOK OF LIFE

*Senior Department of
Wartburg Lesson Helps*

VOLUME I

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INTRODUCTION

THE Second Edition of Wartburg Lesson Helps, Senior Department, is hereby offered to the public. This edition differs from the first one, which was issued only in pamphlet form, in a number of ways. It has been considerably enlarged, especially in the introductory parts; the matter has been divided into lessons followed by questions; maps and illustrations have been added.

The chief aim of this book is to introduce the reader to the contents of the Bible itself, hence, only what is most important has been told about or concerning the Bible. In this way it would overcome the deficiency of most Bible handbooks intended for the school and the home. What benefit is our youth and the Christian home to derive from miscellaneous information concerning the Bible when we neglect—more or less—to instruct them in the contents of the Bible?

The Book of Life is to appear complete in three small volumes; the second one to complete the Old Testament and the third one to treat of the New Testament. Though it is issued as the Senior Department of Wartburg Lesson Helps, it is complete in itself and can be used by Sunday Schools or Young Peoples' Societies independent of Wartburg Lesson Helps; and the Christian home will find in it a brief explanation of the Holy Scriptures. For this reason it has been given a distinct title: The Book of Life.

Parts familiar to the reader are treated in a rather condensed way, (i. e. the history of the patriarchs), while others less familiar to the average reader more in detail, (i. e. the Mosaic Law or the Books of Samuel).

For the translation of the first part, including the Book of Judges, the reader is under obligation to Pastor E. H. Rausch of Waverly, Iowa, and for the remainder to Pastor E. J. Braulick of Oelwein, Iowa. The complete and accurate indices were prepared by Pastor Vollmer of Lost Nation, Iowa.

May God's blessing accompany this little volume on its way.

M. Reu.

Dubuque, Iowa, June 10, 1921.

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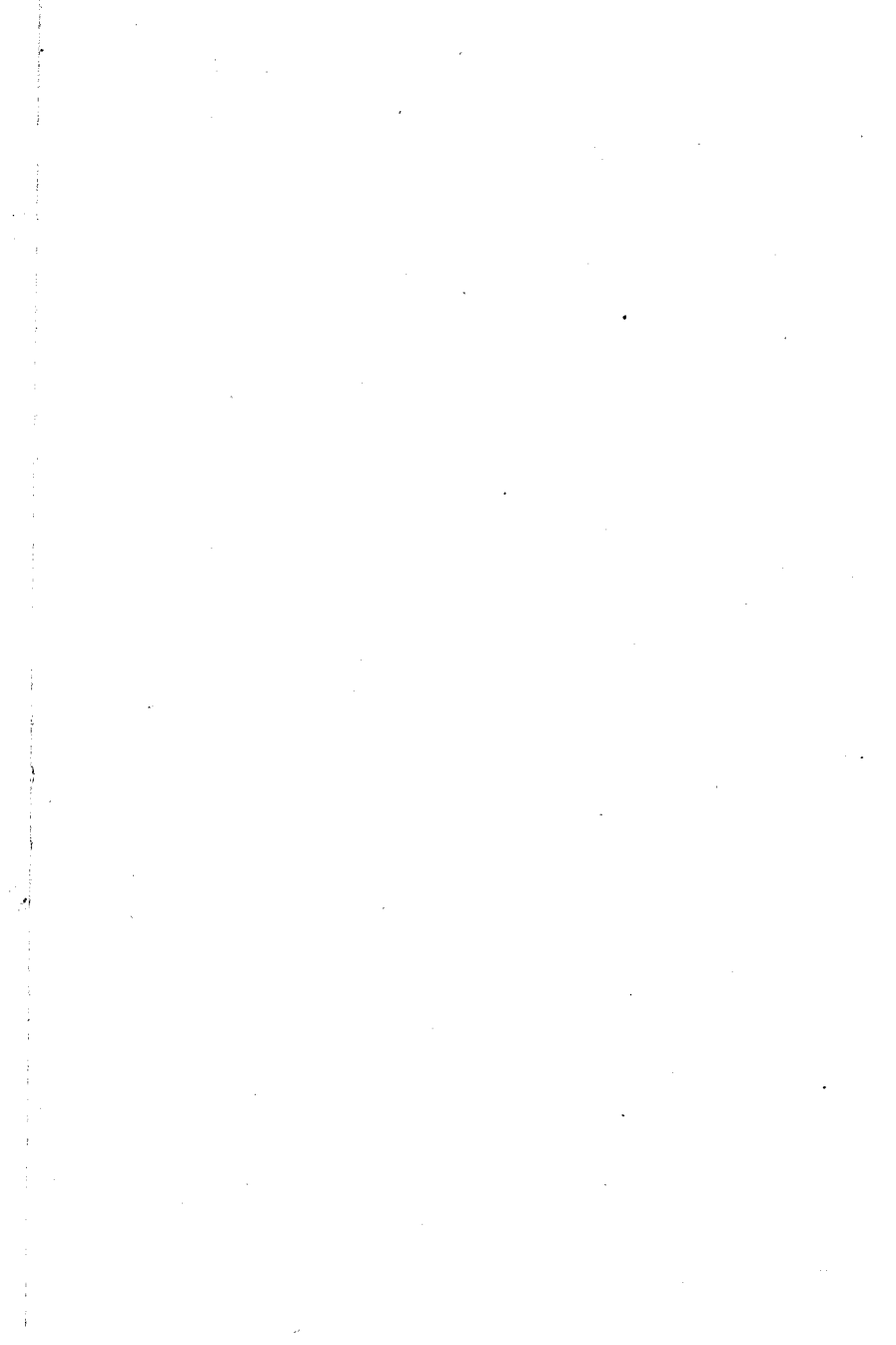
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Notes on the Bible in General.

1. The Bible a Book Like Other Books.*

1. **The Bible, like other books, was also written by men.** Mō'ses, the prophets, and the apostles wrote the Bible, and they were men. They wrote it with pen and ink on paper, even as we write today, though their paper may not have been as smooth as ours is. For while other oriental peoples of the ancient world employed fresh and soft tablets of clay for their writings, and baked them to make them enduring, or wrote on the skins of animals which were carefully smoothed for this purpose, Mō'ses had probably learned in Ê'gypt, how to make paper from the papyrus plant, and then to write on it. In later years the Jews found plenty of papyrus in the Jôr'dan bottoms, especially north of the Lake of Ġēn nēs'a rēt, and used it to make paper. The writing was done with a pen made of a reed (Ps. 45:1; Jer. 8:8; 3 John 13) and pointed with a penknife (Jer. 36:23), and ink (Jer. 36:18; 2 Cor. 3:3; 2 John 12; 3 John 13). When the single sheets were written, they were rolled together. A writing that filled more than one sheet was preserved in this way, that the several sheets were placed on each other and fastened to a stick, and perhaps the whole roll then kept in a case or sheath. (See illustrations on p. 10 and 18.)

2. **The Bible, like all other books in ancient times, was copied by men and thus multiplied.** Since the rolls of paper on which Mō'ses, the prophets, and the apostles wrote the several writings were easily used up, and since the Bible was intended for all men, it must needs be multiplied. The printing press was still unknown, hence the Bible or its

* It must be an iron-clad rule for the class to look up and read every Scripture reference. For this reason every pupil should have a Bible always at hand.

individual parts were copied by hand. The Jews were very painstaking, and Bible copyists were governed by the strictest rules. Though they often had committed entire sections of the Old Testament to memory, yet they were not permitted to trust to their memory in transcribing them, but were held to have another copy before them, and carefully to transcribe word for word, so that no mistakes might creep in. And especial care was devoted to those copies from which the lessons in public worship were read. The New Testament writings also were transcribed with great care. If in spite of this in various instances mistakes have crept in, so that the original wording can not be determined with absolute certainty, yet even then not a single doctrine necessary for salvation has been obscured.

There are many thousands of variants, i. e., differences in the text. They consist of additions, omissions, transpositions or permutations, and concern letters or words and sometimes even entire sentences. The learned copyist tried to improve the text either linguistically or even in regard to subject matter. While some inserted their wisdom above or in the text, others added theirs to the margins. Their improvements or corruptions, however, later became part of the text. Sometimes a passage was altered because it was not understood, or because it was abused by heretics. In some instances additions were made and inserted because they were commonly used in public worship. Thus for instance the doxology of the Lord's Prayer, "For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever," is not a part of the original text, but was added at a later date because the congregations were wont to use these words when the Lord's Prayer was prayed in public worship. The words, "Many be called but few chosen" are hardly original in Matth. 20:16, but are so in Matth. 22:14. The words, "And there are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one," 1 John 5:7, are missing in the earlier Greek manuscripts and also in Luther's version. Whether in Rom. 3:28 the original text read, "**Therefore** we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," or "**For** we conclude, etc.," can not be clearly ascertained, but the example demonstrates that that which is essential is not touched by such discrepancies. It is true, the sense of some passages in their context is altered thereby, but the fundamental thoughts of the Gospel are unchanged. **God Himself watched**

that such changes in the original text in nowise altered or made uncertain a single article of faith. In the case of the Old Testament the copyist almost without exception retained the traditional text. If they felt that a different reading, than the one they found, was necessary, they added it to the margins but never inserted it in the text. And there it remained. But that in spite of this the Hebrew text did not come down to us unchanged even as to its letters can be seen, by comparing the modern text with the Septuagint, the pre-Christian Greek version.

To supplant the paper roll by more enduring material the later copies were made on parchment (named after the city of Pergamus in A'sja Minor, where parchment is said first to have been made, or where the best quality of parchment was made) or the skins of animals, which were especially prepared for this purpose. It seems that copies of the Old Testament were already made on parchment during the last centuries of the pre-Christian era (1 Maccabees 1: 59). If the New Testament books were first written on paper, the copyists in addition to this surely ere long also used the more expensive but also more enduring parchment. Such parchment Bibles were preserved for centuries in perfectly legible condition. The oldest of these still in existence and containing parts of the Old Testament, is now about a thousand years old; the oldest copies of the New Testament which we possess are even 1600 years of age. During the dark ages of mediaeval times monks and nuns above all others copied the Bible and its parts.

Two **Old Testament manuscripts or codices** preserved in Petrograd are regarded as the most ancient of those handed down to us. One of these contains the entire Old Testament in the Hebrew language and dates back to the year A. D. 1009; the other only contains prophetic writings and dates back to the year A. D. 916. A fragment which only contains Gen. 25: 20—Deut. 1: 33 and is preserved in the British Museum at London is perhaps of an even earlier date.

The oldest **codices of the New Testament** which we have are the Sinaiticus and the Vaticanus. The Sinaiticus is so called because it was discovered in the convent of St. Katherine on Mt. Sinai, 1859. It dates back to approximately 325—350. It is preserved at Petrograd. The Vatican manuscript is perhaps of the same age.

It is named after the library of the Vatican in Rome where it is preserved. Two others belong to the fifth century (about 450), the *Alexandrinus* and the *Ephraemi*. The first bears this name because it comes from Alexandria in Egypt. It is now in London. The latter is named after Ephrem the Syrian and is much damaged. It includes about one half of the New Testament. It is now found in the National Library at Paris. Two other codices were written during the sixth century. They are the one named after Beza, including only the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles and written in Greek and Latin, and the one named after Claremont, which includes only the epistles of Paul, also written in Greek and Latin. The former is preserved in the University Library at Cambridge, England, the latter in Paris. All of these codices are written with capital letters (uncial characters) without the accents used in Greek and almost entirely without punctuation. When all manuscripts are counted, including those that only contain small portions of the New Testament, there are about 4000.

3. After the invention of the printing press the Bible, like other books, was printed. When Gutenberg invented the art of printing, 1440, it was also put at the service of the Bible. Men began to multiply it through the printing press rather than through the pen of the copyist, much to the chagrin of the monks who thereby lost a profitable source of income. The first Bible (in the Latin language) was printed between 1450 and 1460. Since then it came out in many editions. Where formerly a complete copy of the Bible cost from 400—500 gold gulden, a printed copy could now be bought for 30 gold gulden. The Old Testament in its original language, the Hē'brew, was first printed in 1488, the New Testament in its original Greek in 1516, so that the entire Bible in its original languages became generally accessible immediately prior to the Reformation.

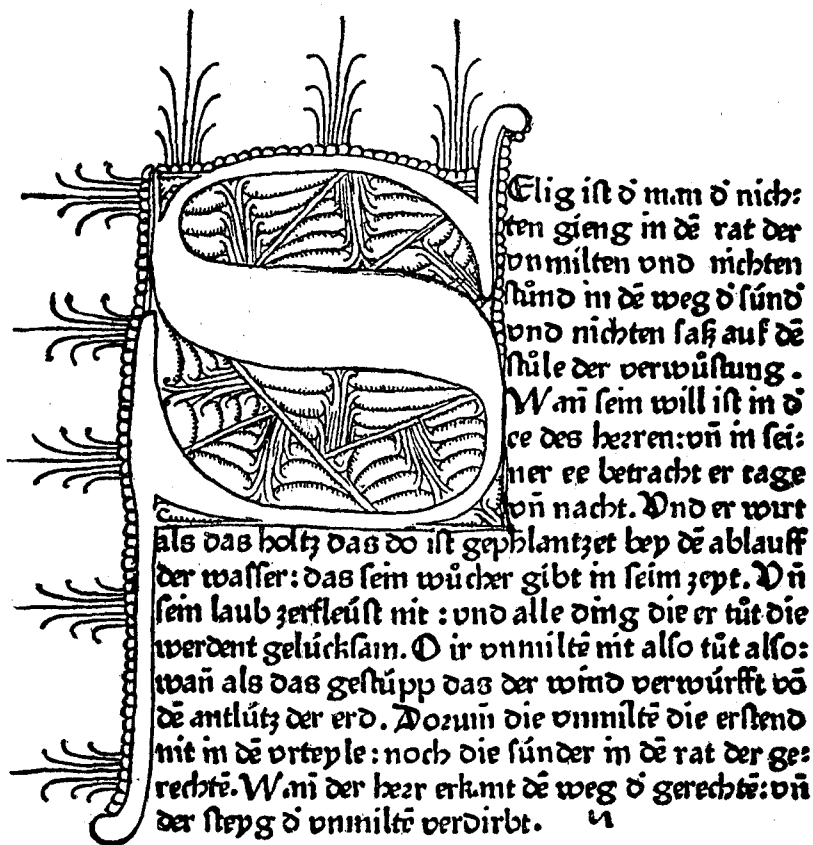
Questions. 1. How must the Bible be judged when viewed purely externally?—2. What facts about the Bible show that it is a book like other books?—3. Who wrote the Bible?—4. On what did oriental people in ancient times usually write?—5. On what did Moses, the prophets, and apostles write?—6. How were books bound and preserved in ancient times?—7. How were the books of the Bible multiplied in those days, and worn out copies replaced?—8. What was especially impressed upon the copyists?—

9. How do you account for the fact that in spite of this all copies do not correspond in every detail?—10. Of what do we speak, therefore, since all copies do not exactly correspond?—11. But what did God not permit even though many thousands of variants crept in?—12. What was used in later times in order to secure more durable copies of the Bible?—13. What can you tell of the oldest copies of the Old and New Testaments?—14. Whose invention put an end to transcribing the Bible?—15. When were the oldest Bibles printed?—16. In what respects was it of importance that printed copies of the Hebrew and Greek editions of the Bible were accessible during the period of the Reformation?

4. The Bible, too, like other books, has been translated into different languages. The Old Testament was originally written in Hē'brew, the New Testament in Greek. But to enable others who did not understand these languages to understand the Bible it was translated into other tongues. Thus before the birth of Christ the Old Testament had already been rendered in the Greek, the universal language of those times, and in this form it received its widest circulation. Tradition tells us, that this translation was made by 70 men, and since the Latin term for 70 is septuaginta, this Greek translation was called the Septuagint. This version becomes important for us also, if we remember that the apostles in quoting from the Old Testament often refer to this Greek version as well as to the original Hē'brew (compare Ps. 95:7—11 and Hebr. 3:7—11). In ancient times already the New Testament was translated into many other languages. The most important version of the Bible in those days was the Latin translation by St. Jerome, about 400 A. D. On account of its wide circulation it was called the Vulgate, and represents the only form in which the Bible was known up to the time of the Reformation. For us Lutherans the German version by Luther (1522—1534) is the most important translation. Luther translated the Old Testament from the Hē'brew and the New Testament from the Greek (i. e., the original languages in which Mō'ses, the prophets, and the apostles wrote) into the German. Of course, there was a German Bible before Luther's day (the first was

printed in 1466), (see illustration on page 7) but it was not a translation of the original Greek and Hē'brew text, but a translation of the Latin version, and besides filled with mistakes. (The Catholic scholar, Johann Eck, Luther's implacable foe, counted not less than 3,000 errors.) Besides the German was extremely faulty. In Luther's version, however, everything is so clear and smooth, as though Mō'ses and the prophets themselves had originally written the Bible in German. It is not entirely free from errors, but whatever errors there are, they do in no way becloud or obscure God's way of salvation. Catholics were fully conscious of what they were doing when even during Luther's lifetime they copied nearly the whole of his translation. As a whole it has not been surpassed to the present day, however many new versions have been made.—The English version is largely the work of William Tyndale, who was burned at the stake in 1536 because of his evangelical convictions, and Miles Coverdale. King James I of England appointed a commission, 1604, whose function it was carefully to revise the existing English versions according to the original texts. Thus the Authorized Version or King James Bible, (see illustration on page 9) which is used to the present day, came into being (1611). In 1881 the so-called Revised Version was finished, just as in the German language the German version by Luther was circulated in a revised edition (i. e., carefully re-edited, compared, and somewhat changed) since 1883.

The four Gospels were already issued as one running story in the Syrian (or Greek) language, ca. 160. This edition (in Latin and German) later became of importance for the Church of Germany. The **Syrians** also were the first to translate the entire New Testament into their language. This version is still in use among them. A **Gothic** version was issued during the fourth century by Bishop Wulfila. Fragments of this version written in silver characters are still preserved at Upsala, Sweden. During the fifth century it was translated into the **Armenian**; during the sixth into the **Egyptian**; during the seventh into the **Anglo-Saxon**; during the ninth into the **Slavic**, etc. Luther translated the New Testament during his exile in Wart-



PSALM 1.

Proof of the second German Bible turned out by the printing press.

It was published about 1470 by H. Eggesteyn, of Strassburg, and is a reprint of the first German Bible, printed by Joh. Mentel at Strassburg.

burg Castle, 1522. In September of the same year it was printed (see illustration on page 11). He completed the translation of the entire Bible 1534. When Tyndale translated the New Testament into the English, 1525 (Wyclif had already perfected an English version of the Vulgate in 1380), and issued it with a preface and explanatory glosses (see illustration on page 9), he was greatly indebted to Luther. The external arrangement together with the preface and the glosses are taken over from Luther, and even for the translation of the New Testament text Luther's New Testament of 1524 was the constant guide down to matters of minutest detail. And since the Authorized Version of 1611 is largely based upon Tyndale's version of the New Testament, it can safely be maintained that the modern English Bible in no small measure is dependent upon Luther's German Bible.

In addition to the Authorized Version and the Revised Edition the American Standard Edition of the Revised Bible is since 1901 largely used. This American Edition includes such changes in the translation which American scholars deemed necessary but did not succeed in introducing to the Revised Version.

5. The Bible, like other books, has a title page and divisions. Every book has a title page. Our English Bible bears the caption, "The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testament Translated out of the Original Tongues: and with the Former Translations Diligently Compared and Revised by His Majesty's Special Command."—Every book is divided into parts. The Bible, too, is divided into two chief parts, the books of the Old Testament and the books of the New Testament. Testament means covenant. The Old Testament contains the books that tell us about the Old Covenant which God concluded with *Īs'ra'el* through *Mō'ses*. The New Testament includes the books that tell us about the New Covenant which God founded for all peoples through Christ. The books of the Old Covenant also show that God is love and grace (Gen. 3:15; history of the patriarchs; heading of the decalogue; Ex. 34:6 and 7; psalms and sections of the prophets), still it is always the sovereign will of the majestic and jealous God which stands in the forefront. "This do, and thou shalt live!" "Cursed

The fyfth Chapter.

When he sawe the people, he went vp into a mountaine/and when he was sent/hys disciples cam vnto him / and he opened his mouth/and taught them sayinge: Blessed are the poore in spere: for there is the kyngdom of heven. Blessed are they that mourne: for they shalbe comforted. Blessed are the meke: for they shall inheret the erthe. Blessed are they which hūger and thirst for rightewesnes: for they shalbe filled. Blessed are the mercifull: for they shall obteyne mercy. Blessed are the pure in hert: for they shall se god. Blessed are the maynteyners of peace: for they shalbe called the chyldren of god. Blessed are they which suffre persecucion for rightewesnes sake: for there is the kyngdom of heven. Blessed are ye whē mens hall revyle you/and persecute you/and shal falsly saye all manner of evle sayings agaynst you for my sake, & ioyce ad be gladd/for greate is youre reward

Tyndale's Quarto Edition of New Testament. (Printed by P. Quentel, Cologne, 1525, from the only remaining fragment, in British Museum.)

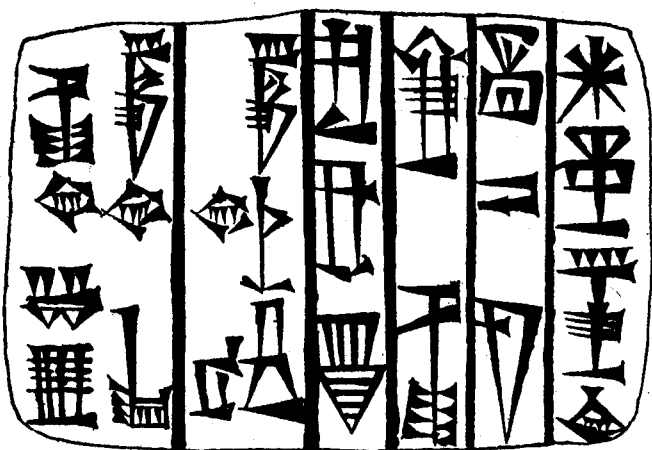
CHAP. XII.

1 All giftes, 2. 3 how excellent soever, are nothing worth without charitie. 4 The praises therof, and 13 prelation before hope & faith.

Though I speake with the tongues of men & of Angels, and haue not charitie, I am become as sounding brasle or a tinkling cymbal

2 And though I haue the gift of prophesie, and vnderstand all mysteries and all knowledge: and though I haue all faith, so that I could remooue mountaynes, and haue no charitie. I

be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." (Deut. 27:26; Lev. 18:5; Luke 10:28.) The books of the New Testament also speak of what we must do, but its heart and center is the gospel, i. e., the joyous tidings of what God in His wondrous love has done for us. Here we



A clay tablet of King Dungi of Ur. 2500 years B. C.

are told, "Believe on the Lord Jē'sus Chrīst, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts 16:31.) The entire New Testament is contained in the one word, John 3:16. The Old Testament in its history, the law, and especially the prophets, tells us of the preparations made for salvation; the New Testament tells us of the realization of salvation in Jē'sus Christ, and its perfection and completion on the last day. The Old Testament is filled with the hopes and waitings for what is to be (Gen. 49:18; Hab. 2:3; Ps. 27:14); the New Testament with blessed possession of what is (2 Cor. 1:20). The latter also speaks of the hope for things to be, the second coming of Chrīst, and eternal life (Phil. 3:20; 2 Peter 3:13; 1 John 3:2); but that is only the fruitage of what now germ-

like we possess through the faith in Jē'sus Chrīst (Rom. 8: 1, 17, 23, 24).

In each of the two testaments we distinguish three classes of books: a) historical books; b) didactic or doctrinal books; c) prophetic books. The first class is called historical books, because principally though not exclusively it contains history; the second, didactic or doctrinal, because it principally affords salutary teachings; the third, prophetic, because its books were written by the prophets and wholly or in part treat of the future. The Old Testament contains 17 historical books, 5 doctrinal books, 16 (17) prophetic books. The New Testament includes 5 historical books, 21 doctrinal books, and 1 prophetic book.

The order and the division of the books of the Old Testament as we find it in Luther's Bible and in the Authorized Version, does not correspond in all points with the order and division as given in the Hebrew Bible. But this difference has nothing to do with the contents. We place both orders side by side:

HEBREW BIBLE:

I. The Law:

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. Book of Moses.

II. The Prophets:

- a) Joshua, Judges, 1. and 2. Samuel, 1. and 2. Kings.
b) Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

III. The (other) Writings:

Psalter, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1. and 2. Chronicles.

GERMAN AND ENGLISH BIBLE:

I. Historical Books:

- a) 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. Book of Moses.
b) Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1. and 2. Samuel, 1. and 2. Kings, 1. and 2. Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.

II. Didactic or Doctrinal Books:
Job, Psalter, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon.

III. The Prophets:

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

The New Testament books also are not always given in the same order, yet the differences are far less great. We place the order of the German and English Versions side by side:

GERMAN BIBLE:

I. Historical Books:

The four Gospels of Matthew,
Mark, Luke, and John.
The Acts of the Apostles.

II. Doctrinal Books or Epistles:

a) The Epistles of Paul:

Romans,
1. and 2. Corinthians,
Galatians,
Ephesians,
Philippians,
Colossians,
1. and 2. Thessalonians,
1. and 2. Timothy,
Titus,
Philemon.

b) 1. and 2. Peter,
1., 2. and 3. John,
Hebrews,
James,
Jude.

III. Prophetic Book:

Revelation.

ENGLISH BIBLE:

I. Historical Books:

The four Gospels of Matthew,
Mark, Luke, and John.
The Acts of the Apostles.

II. Doctrinal Books or Epistles:

a) The Epistles of Paul:

Romans,
1. and 2. Corinthians,
Galatians,
Ephesians,
Philippians,
Colossians,
1. and 2. Thessalonians,
1. and 2. Timothy,
Titus,
Philemon,
Hebrews (because some name Paul as its author).

b) The Catholic, i. e., General Epistles (those not addressed to specific congregations):
James,
1. and 2. Peter,
1., 2. and 3. John,
Jude.

III. Prophetic Book:

Revelation.

When the Old Testament books (cf. page 12) originating as they did in the course of the centuries were collected as our present **Old Testament Canon**, and when this collection was finished we do not know with certainty. That Moses made the beginning in obedience to the command of God is evident from Deut. 1:5; 31:9, 24. Samuel may also have worked at this since he tried to acquaint his pupils in his schools for prophets with the glorious past of Israel. The Psalms and Jeremiah in many instances can hardly be understood if

a part of our present Old Testament especially the historical books were not in use at the time. 2 Chron. 29:25—30 shows that during the reign of King Hezekiah the Psalms of David and Asaph had been collected for use in public worship. Prov. 25:1 informs us that "the men of Hezekiah copied proverbs of Solomon." Of course, that these sacred writings collected at the time were not always used and during periods of idolatry were completely forgotten is evident from 2 Chron. 34:14—33. Israel became conscious of the great value of its sacred writings during its Babylonian captivity. Thus it is likely that Ezra and Nehemiah after the captivity undertook the work of collecting the Old Testament writings (comp. 2 Makk. 2:13 and the following). Indeed, it is likely that the greater part of the present Old Testament was already bound as a well arranged whole, for otherwise we could not understand why the books of Esther, Ezra, and Nehemiah, and especially the two books of Chronicles are found at the end of the entire Old Testament in the Hebrew Bible instead of after the two books of Kings where they belong according to their contents. This is most easily explained if we accept that the Old Testament up to Ecclesiastes (compare the order of the Hebrew Bible) was a completed whole. Books could well be added to this, but men were unwilling to change and insert new books into the collection as already existing. By all means, at the time when the Greek version of the Old Testament was issued, the Old Testament was a finished whole. This Greek translation, however, was undertaken 250 B. C. and finished 130 B. C. When Christ came and ever and again referred to the Old Testament writings as the "Scriptures," the Old Testament had long since been collected and was regularly read Sabbath after Sabbath in the synagogues (Luke 4:16—22; Acts 13:15; 15:21). The order of the Old Testament 1. Law (five books of Moses), 2. Prophets (Joshua to Malachi; comp. order of books in Hebrew Bible), and 3. (other) Writings (Psalms to 2 Chron.; comp. order of Hebrew Bible) had long since been in use (comp. Luke 24:27). Luke 24:44 we read instead, law, prophets, and psalms, since the psalms were the most important part of the "writings." Sometimes the Old Testament is simply called "Law and Prophets" (Luke 16:29), sometimes simply "Law" (comp. John 10:34 with Psalm 82:6; John 12:34 with Psalm 110:4).

The New Testament writings were also collected at an early date and united as a whole, for the Christian Church soon realized that in them it possessed writings equally as sacred and indispensable as those of the people of Israel in their Old Testament. At first they were scat-

tered for they were addressed to different congregations, different persons, different larger sections of Christendom (e. g. the Epistle of James, James 1:1). But in part due to apostolic direction, in part to the intercourse of Christian congregations with each other, these congregations exchanged and circulated the apostolic writings among each other. Thus as early as A. D. 100 the principal writings of the New Testament were widely known and used. Since A. D. 150 we have express testimony to this fact. A. D. 200 the Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles of Paul, 1 Peter, 1 John, and Revelations were generally used. The four Gospels were called "the Gospel," the Acts and Epistles of the apostles, "the Apostle." Only 2 Peter, James, Jude, Hebrews, and 2 and 3 John were not as universally known and were not regarded as co-ordinate with the others. In some localities at that time writings were read in public worship which were later excluded entirely, such as the Epistle of Barnabas, the Teachings of the Twelve Apostles, the Shepherd of Hermas, all of which were written in post-apostolic times. The Church definitely decided the extent of the New Testament as we know it today at the Synod of Hippo Rhegius (393) and Carthage (397) in North Africa. Augustine's influence was here dominant. 2 Peter, James, Jude, Hebrews, and 2 and 3 John were added for universal use in all Christian congregations and their public worship in addition to the writings already accepted A. D. 200. On the other hand all writings originating in post-apostolic times were excluded from use in public worship. This was certainly not done without the guidance of the Holy Spirit. He saw to it, that only the writings of the apostolic times became the "New Testament," i. e., the sacred writings of the Church of the New Covenant founded on Golgotha. The New Testament Church here has everything it needs. If Luther did not place Hebrews, James, Jude, and the Revelations on the same level with other New Testament writings, his differentiation did not prevail.

Some Bibles contain the **Apocrypha**, included between the Old and New Testaments. They are first found in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, and, as Luther properly said, "are good and useful reading, but not to be put on the same level with the Holy Scriptures." These books are called Apocrypha, i. e., hidden or spurious, to differentiate them from the canonical books, or those appointed to be read in public worship which are the only guide and rule (= canon) for the faith and doctrine of Christians.

We speak of 14 **Apocryphal Books**, 1 and 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, addition to the Book of Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, The Book of Sirach called Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, The Song of the Three Holy Children, The History of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Manasses, 1 and 2 Maccabees.—The **Roman Church** includes these apocryphal writings among the canonical books, and especially so since it tries to prove some of its false teachings from them, e. g. purgatory from 2 Maccabees 12:42—46. **Luther** added them to his version but expressly termed them as such which are good and wholesome to read but must not be put on the same level with the Holy Scriptures. The **Reformed Churches** reject them altogether. For this reason they are not found in our English Bible as a rule, for this originated in the Reformed bodies.

The biblical books are again divided into chapters, and the chapters into verses. But this division did not originate with the sacred writers, no more than the headings of individual books (e. g. "The Epistle of St. Paul, the Apostle, to the Romans"), or the table of contents at the beginning of chapters. These were added at a later date, to facilitate the ready use of the Bible. These headings for the individual books became necessary as soon as the several books or writings were put together as one book, the Bible. The division into chapters dates back about 700 years, our division into verses about 400 years. **Luther's** version already contained the division into chapters, but not the division into verses. The subscriptions found at the end of the New Testament books (e. g. at the end of the Epistle to the Galatians, "Unto the Galatians written from Rome") also are not original nor always fully trustworthy.

Questions. 1. How must the Bible be judged when viewed purely externally?—2. What facts about the Bible show that it is a book like other books?—3. In which language was the Old Testament originally written?—4. Into what language was it first translated?—5. Why is this Greek version of the Old Testament called the Septuagint?—6. In which language did the apostles write the New Testament?—7. What is the Vulgate?—8. Why is this Latin version of the Bible of such importance?—9. When did **Luther** translate the Bible into the German?—10. Why did he publish a German translation if there were German versions already on the market?—11. What can you tell of the history of the English Bible?—12. What is the relation of the English Bible translation to **Luther's** version?—13. Into how many parts is the Bible divided?—14. What does the word Testament mean?—15. What do the books of the Old Testament tell about?—16. What do the books of the New Testament tell about?—17. What is always kept in the forefront in the Old Covenant?—18. What does the New Covenant ever keep in the forefront?—19. What do we

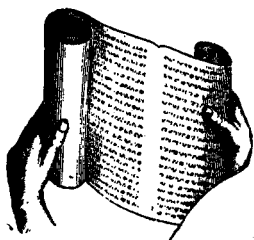
understand under Law?—20. What do we understand under Gospel?—21. Has the Old Testament nothing to do with the salvation proclaimed by the New Covenant?—22. What namely does the Old Testament do for salvation revealed to us in Jesus Christ?—23. Into what classes do we divide the books of the Old and New Testaments?—24. Enumerate the books of the Bible in the order in which you have them in your Bible.—25. What can you say about the Apocrypha?

2. The Bible a Book Different From Any Other.

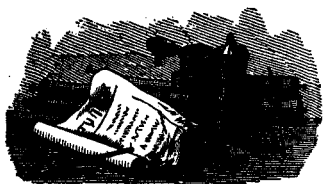
1. The Bible is the oldest of books. There are books and writings, indeed, that may be older than the oldest parts of the Old Testament. There was a book found recently, which a Babylonian king caused to be written at about the time when Ā'brā hām lived in Cā'nāan. And there are many books that are older than the latest portions of the Old Testament and all the books of the New Testament. But the Bible does not consist of a single book. It is rather a collection of 66 books and writings, of which the oldest (the five books of Mō'ses) were written about 1,500 years before Chrīst and the latest during the first century after Chrīst. A **collection** of books such as the collection of the Bible but older than the Bible does not exist.

2. The Bible is the most persecuted of books. In Austria (Salzburg) on the altar of a certain church there is a mold covered and half burned Bible, which commemorates the terrible persecutions which evangelical Christians were forced to suffer. This Bible dates back to 1548. It passed through five fires and was buried twenty times, and it always re-appeared. What this individual copy of the Bible experienced the Bible as a whole experienced. It is the great martyr among books, for no book of the whole world has ever been more abused, maligned, persecuted, and cursed than the Bible. It was first persecuted by pagans, later by Christians. When pagans attempted to destroy the Church, they demanded of Christians to deliver up the sacred writings, the Bible, for they well knew, the Bible is the source of courage and strength, counsel and help for the Christians.

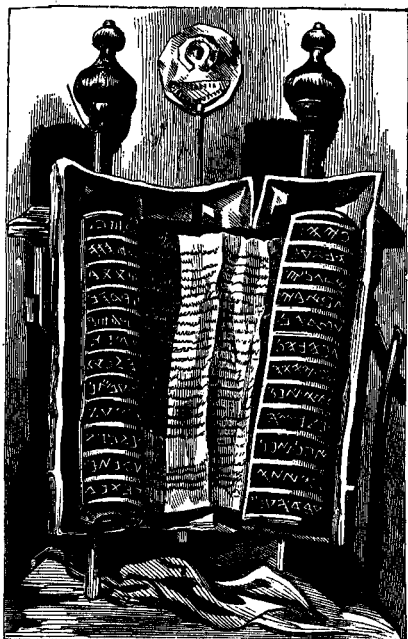
Many, many Bibles were then destroyed. During the middle ages the authorities of the Roman Church took the written parts of the Bible away from the common people, and burned them, for they would not have the common people read the



Scroll and its case.



Scroll with writing materials.



The Samaritan scroll containing the law (Pentateuch) with its case.

Bible themselves, or at least not without the explanations of the priest. When Luther's version of the Bible was issued it was persecuted with much zeal and oftentimes burned, and even to the present day only the translation authorized and approbated by the pope and his counsellors is tolerated. The enmity of infidels towards God has also often ridiculed and cursed the Bible. And the indifference of nominal Christians has permitted it to lie in the dust, as though this venerable book had lost its value for modern times.

3. The Bible is the most widely distributed of all books.

However much the Bible was persecuted it still continued to live and proved of greater strength than all enmity and wisdom of the world. At the close of the eighteenth century the wicked French infidel, Voltaire, wrote, "A hundred years hence the Bible will be a forgotten book, and only preserved as a memento of the folly of past generations." In reality a time soon followed, in which the Bible was more circulated than ever before, and in the very house in which Voltaire once wrote these malicious words, there is now said to be a vast storeroom of Bibles ready for the market. Think of the tremendous zeal to circulate the Bible that became manifest when Luther had translated it into the German. In a few years only (1522—1533) there were 85 editions of the New Testament and 26 of the Psalter. More and more it became a household treasure. During the last century one Bible society after the other was organized for the sole purpose of bringing the Bible to the people in good though cheap editions. When the spirit of missions developed and the interest to work among heathen peoples grew, the Bible was translated into many new languages, and brought to many more people. In not a few instances portions of the Bible were the first things ever to be printed in the language of these different people. Today the Bible is issued in nearly 550 different languages. When the London Bible Society celebrated its centenary in 1904, inhabitants of Borneo who formerly collected human skulls, as our children collect stamps or other things, sent gifts of money, former cannibals of the south seas sent copra, women of Manchuria sent embroidery, child widows of India the proceeds from the sale of their pet chickens, negroes in Africa whole packages of costly shells. These were their thank-offerings for the fact that missionaries had brought them the Bible.

4. The Bible is the most significant of books. It is true, there are many books that are more bulky than the Bible, and answer all sorts of questions which the Bible

passes by. But in that one matter which is the most important for man, and on which ultimately everything depends in life and death, no book so enlightens, so simply and clearly and decisively instructs as does the Bible. Here we find the answer to the question, Who is God? What can He do? What has He done and will He do? How is He disposed towards man? What is man? How did we originate? What are we destined for? How can we find a gracious God? How should we live properly, suffer patiently, die blessedly? What is the world about us? Why should we not fear it? Why should we not love or attach ourselves to it too much? Here we are given history in the simplest form so that every person of average intelligence can grasp it, not indeed the history of the people of the world, but the history of our salvation. We learn how God prepared our salvation in the Old Testament, how in the fulness of time (Gal. 4:4) He brought it about through Jesus Christ, and how He will come again to perfect it. We have there the discourses of the prophets, of the Lord and His apostles, which surpass all other discourses that we hear or read of men. We have here the songs of King Dā'vid and other poets which reflect every tone and tenor of the human heart from the rollings of holy anger or the heartrending lamentations of despair to the softest notes of mercy and the most impassioned songs of love (Ps. 97; 38; 102; 91; 18). There is no condition in life, for which the Bible does not afford light and strength, comfort and counsel, if only it is taken prayerfully and with all seriousness, and its words heeded (Ps. 94:19; 119:105). Incidentally it also enlightens us on many facts in the history of men and also of nature, and does so with greater thoroughness and certainty than any other book.

Questions. 1. What becomes evident as soon as the Bible is examined not only as to its externals but also as to its history and its contents?—2. What is it about the Bible that shows that it is a book unlike any other?—3. Are there no books more ancient than the Bible?—4. And yet in what sense must it be said never-

theless that the Bible is the most ancient of them all?—5. What else shows that the Bible must be a special and unique book?—6. Who first persecuted the Bible?—7. Why did pagans persecute the Bible?—8. Who later persecuted the Bible and in part does so to the present day?—9. Why did the Roman Church persecute the Bible and especially the Bible in the vernacular?—10. How about the Bible today in spite of the fact that it was persecuted, or is scorned and ridiculed by infidels?—11. Why was Luther so anxious to have the Bible widely disseminated and read by everybody?—12. What can you say about the distribution of the Bible in Luther's day?—13. In how many different languages is the Bible distributed today?—14. What are the societies called whose special object it is to distribute the Bible?—15. What must the contents of the Bible be since it is so widely distributed?—16. What is it that makes the Bible the most significant of books?—17. Mention some questions which only the Bible can answer satisfactorily.—18. What kind of a story does the Bible tell us?—19. Where are the most beautiful hymns and poems of the Bible found?—20. What does the Bible give for all conditions of life to him who properly uses it?

5. The Bible is the most uniform of books. Of course there are other books so uniform that they contain no contradictions. That is not at all astounding for they were written by a single author in a few weeks or in the course of a few years. The Bible, however, was written in the course of 1,600 years, and in this time during many different periods and in many different countries (Ā rā' bī ā, Cā'nāan, Bāb' ŷ lō nia, Ā'sj ā Minor, Greece, and Rōme) many wholly different authors (differing in social standing, age, and education: kings and shepherds, fishermen and tent weavers, publicans and physicians, prophets and priests, generals and emissaries of peace) contributed; and none of these writers had an inkling that the products of their pens would ever become part and parcel of the Holy Scriptures, the Bible. When Dā'vīd sang his songs, and ĩ sā'jah penned his discourses they did not in the least intend to contribute to a book, which together with the then existing books of Mō'ses and others would ever become the sacred book for the Jews, yes for all men, and yet their writings are founded upon and harmonize with these. When Paul and the other apostles wrote their epistles and the evangelists composed

their Gospels, they did not expect that their writings would be collected and added to the Old Testament as the "New Testament." And yet no two books can better harmonize and supplement each other than do the Old and New Testaments. Without the New Testament the Old Testament lacks fulfillment and crowning glory. Indeed in its main thoughts it would be a falsehood if the New Testament had not been added. On the other hand, the New Testament would lack its fundament, and, as it were, would hang in the air without the Old (2 Cor. 1:20). When the Apostle Jöhn wrote his "Revelations" he certainly did not think that his writing would form the keystone and conclusion of the New Testament, and yet not only the New Testament but the entire Bible would lack something without the "Revelations of St. Jöhn." By virtue of the fact that it was added to the Bible it became evident, even to the dullest eye, that the Bible is a unit. For as the Bible in Gen. 1 begins with the account of the creation of heaven and earth, in Rev. 21 and 22 it concludes with the promise of the new heaven and new earth, from which everything will be expurgated which sin injected into God's creation. Where is there another book whose component parts are separated 1,600 years from one another and yet stand forth a single tree, all parts most closely grown together, filled with **one** life current and pointing in one and the same direction? Where is there another book compiled by different authors in different countries and in different periods of time, who knew nothing of their collaboration, which nevertheless forms one harmonious unit without inherent contradictions, that has but **one** fundamental thought, redemption through Jē'sus Chrīst (Gen. 3:15; Matth. 1:21; Gal. 3:13; 4:4), only **one** way of salvation, faith in Jē'sus Chrīst (Gen. 15:6; John 3:16; Acts 16:31), and knows only **one** objective point, temporal and eternal communion with God (Gen. 2:8; 1 John 1:3; Rev. 21:3)? Of course Mō'ses has a different literary style than ʾsā'jah, and Jöhn than Paul, but even so there are no

contradictions. True, the glory of the Godhead is not yet revealed in all its fulness in Mō'ses, for the Bible, like a school, leads us step by step ever deeper and deeper into the knowledge of truth; yet the most profound revelation of God given us in His Son (Hebr. 1:1 and 2) and shining forth from the New Testament, is only the consummation of that which began in Mō'ses.

It is especially noteworthy that the life, suffering, and death of Jesus as well as the redemption brought about by Him is prophesied at different times in different books of the Old Testament oftentimes down to minute details, so that Jesus could show His disciples from the wonderful correspondence of **prophecy and fulfillment** that He is the Redeemer of the world through His suffering and death (Luke 24:25—27). Isaiah 49:1—8 affords a complete survey of the life of the "Servant of the Lord," i. e., Jesus Christ: verses 1—2 birth and obscurity in Nazareth; 3 baptism; 4 prophetic ministry (Matth. 16:13, 14); 5—8 suffering and glorification; similarly in Isaiah 53: verse 2 birth in lowliness; 2 prophetic ministry; 3—12 suffering, death, burial, resurrection. Individual traits of Christ's life: virgin birth Isaiah 7:14; birth in Bethlehem in troublous times Micah 5:1—2; sojourn in Egypt Hosea 11:1, for Israel, "the Son of God," is a prototype of the true Son of God, i. e., Jesus (Matth. 2:15); His residence in Nazareth in Galilee Isaiah 9:1—2, comp. Isaiah 11:1; 53:2, Zechariah 6:12; for the Hebrew term for "branch" is Nezer. The word Nazareth is connected with this. The preparation of His people through John the Baptist for His coming Isaiah 40:3—5; Malachi 3:1; God's declaration at His baptism Isaiah 49:3; 42:1; reception of the Holy Spirit Isaiah 61:1; prophetic ministry Isaiah 9:1—2; 42:1—7; 61:1—3; Ezekiel 34:11—16; healing of sick Isaiah 35:5; 53:4. comp. Matth. 8:16, 17; lack of success in His work with Israel Isaiah 49:4; 53:1. And especially is this true of Jesus' suffering and death. Isaiah 53 was written 800 years before Jesus' death and yet it reads as though Isaiah had been a witness beneath His cross. Individual traits of His suffering: Entry into Jerusalem Zechariah 9:9 ff.; Judas' betrayal Ps. 41:9; Zech. 11:12; Jesus taken captive and the flight of His disciples Zech. 13:7, comp. Matth. 26:56; deliverance to heathen, distribution of His garments, the drink of vinegar, the hanging between two thieves, the derision, His being forsaken of God, Jesus' patience and innocence Ps. 22; Isaiah 53; Ps. 69:21; the passover lamb no bone of which must be broken Ex. 12:46, comp. John 19:36; the piercing with a spear Zech. 12:10;

His burial in the sepulchre of a rich man Isaiah 53:9 [should be translated: His grave was to be with the wicked (so determined by the Jews namely) but in the state of His death He was with the rich]; His resurrection and glorification Isaiah 53:10—12; Ps. 16:10, *comp.* Acts 2:27, 31; Ps. 110; Ps. 68:18, *comp.* Acts 2:33, 36.

6. The Bible is the most efficacious of books. There are other books, too, which exert great influence, both good and bad, so that we must exercise due care in selecting what we would read. Yet the greatest and most enduring effects have been made by the Bible. A father once wrote into the Bible of his child, "Either this book will keep you away from sin, or sin will keep you away from this book." Another said, "How is it, that the German people notwithstanding the fact that since the times of the Reformation it passed through the most stupendous internal and external convulsions, yet in its depths maintained intact an indestructible kernel of religious fervor and moral power? That was due to the fact, that there was no hovel, however small, no home, however poor, to which Luther's Bible did not penetrate; to the fact that this book became not only the people's book of prayer and devotion, but also its reading and family book, yes the whole intellectual and moral world in which the young grew up and to which the old returned, in which the common man noted his family history and the memorial days of his loved ones and in whose contents the wearied and the burdened found comfort and relief from the troubles of the day." Missionary history shows how to the present day entire peoples are renewed through the Bible. Especially note this: a) Unlike any other book the Bible exposes even the most secret sins of men and puts them before the countenance of God, Hebr. 4:2; Ps. 90:8.—b) It crushes proud and hardened hearts and moves men to surrender to God, Jer. 23:29.—c) It transforms sinbound men into free children of God, Rom. 1:16; John 8:31, 32. A Christian negro replied to an unbelieving white, who attempted to dissuade him from his Bible, "How can this book be a falsehood, that causes my heart to leap? I was a

drunkard, and a thief, and a liar, and this book spoke to me, and made me a new man!”—d) It gives comfort even in suffering and death, Jer. 15:16; Ps. 94:19; Ps. 19:7—11. Even Jē’sus in the desert subsisted on nothing but the Word of God, Matth. 4:4, vanquished the Devil with a word from Scripture, Matth. 4:4, 7, and 10, and departed this life with a Scripture word on His lips, Matth. 27:46; Luke 23:46; John 19:28. Whoever experienced the power of God’s Word in his own heart will find it “more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb” (Ps. 19:10). He will also understand the Psalmist’s lofty eulogy of the Word (Ps. 119), and he will sing,

“Teach me to love Thy sacred Word,
And view my Savior there.”

Even those sections of Scripture of which, perhaps, we least expect it, prove their power. Thus a certain student confessed, that he received the first impulse for his conversion from the so-called psalms of vengeance (Ps. 35; 41; 69; 109). For another the genealogical tables with their ever recurring “and he died” (Gen. 5) became the cause of a sleepless night, and a sincere return to God. Therefore note: what may seem unimportant to you today, may become important to you later, and what is unedifying to you, may lead another to a complete change of life. Though in different ways yet the Bible is intended to serve all men “for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16), and will not return void from any one, but accomplish the purpose for which it is sent (Isaiah 55:10 and 11).

Questions. 1. What has shown us thus far that the Bible is a book unlike any other?—2. What else shows this same fact?—3. Why is it especially remarkable that the Bible is a uniform book containing no contradiction?—4. Indeed, it is a most remarkable fact that its individual books originated during many different centuries, written by different authors and in different countries and yet contain no contradictions; what other fact makes this doubly remarkable?—5. What is the relation of the Old and New Testaments to each other?—6. What prophecies of the Old

Testament need only to be compared with the New Testament to see the unity of both most clearly?—7. Mention some of the traits of the life of Jesus prophesied in the Old Testament.—8. Which story shows us that Jesus employed this unity of prophecy and fulfillment to demonstrate to His disciples that He is the true Messiah and Redeemer?—9. In what respects does a comparison of Gen. 1 and Revelations 21 and 22 clearly demonstrate this oneness of the whole Bible?—10. What is the **one** fundamental thought that unites all books of the Bible?—11. What is the **one** way of salvation taught in all books?—12. What is the **one** goal to which God would lead us according to all books of the Bible?—13. What can the Bible be compared with since it would lead men from the fall of man to Christ, and the apostles step by step ever deeper and deeper into the knowledge of divine truth?—14. Mention another reason why the Bible is a book unlike any other.—15. What only needs to be examined in order to see the great effects that have been made by the Bible?—16. Which history shows it to us most palpably?—17. Mention four facts which demonstrate that the Bible has produced great results.—18. Show how even such parts of the Bible of which we would least expect it have produced results.—19. What should we learn of this for our own lives?—20. Quote the passage from Isaiah which so beautifully expresses that God's Word always accomplishes its purpose.

7. Yes, the Bible is the very Word of God to men. This explains its wondrous power, and shows why it is the savour of life unto life for them that are saved, and the savour of death unto death for them that perish (2 Cor. 2:16), and why it is not without influence for any one who conscientiously uses it. For this reason only could it be a book of such uniformity, a unit, though the origin of its several books covers a period of 1,600 years, for in the sight of God a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is passed (Ps. 90:4). And this also accounts for the fact that it survived the most terrible persecutions, and spread all the farther, for God's Word is eternal, as Jē'sus says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matth. 24:35).

The Bible claims divine character for itself, though it is written by men. In many sections of the law and the prophets we read that they were written at God's express command (e. g. Ex. 17:14; 34:27 and the following; Deut. 31:19, 24; Jer. 36:2; Rev. 1:11). In several verses of the New

Testament words of the Old are termed words of the Holy Spirit (e. g. Hebr. 3:7; 9:8; 10:15). The Lord Jē'sus Chrīst speaks of the Old Testament as a book of the truth, the validity of which can not be questioned by any one (Matth. 4:4, 7, 10; 26:54; John 10:35). St. Paul expressly states, that the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament were given by the Holy Spirit, inspired of God (Inspiration), 2 Tim. 3:16; and St. Pē'ter says (2 Peter 1:21), "The holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." But if the Old Testament is the Word of God, then the New Testament must also be the Word of God. Christ promised the Holy Spirit to His disciples for the entire scope of their activity (John 16:13; 14:26), and moved by this Spirit they spoke, and also wrote their gospels and epistles in words "which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (1 Cor. 2:9—13). For this reason they were sure, that their words are true and absolutely dependable. They were so sure of this that the Apostle Paul could say (Gal. 1:8), "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Thus, indeed, the Bible is nothing less than God's Word addressed to us children of men, and the true lamp unto our feet, and light unto our path (Ps. 119:105). It is that which makes us wise unto salvation (2 Tim. 3:15), the source and the criterion for all doctrine and all knowledge of saving truth. Though written by men, it is God's Word, by means of which God Himself speaks to us, reveals to us, what He has done for us in the past, and will do for us in the future; wherein He opens His heart to us and tells us, what we must believe and teach, how we must live properly and die blessedly.

The peculiar operation of the Holy Spirit upon the prophets and apostles for the purpose of composing the writings which we today term the Holy Scriptures we call **Inspiration**. The term is taken from 2 Tim. 3:16 (Luther: von Gott eingegeben, English Bible: inspired of God). The Holy Spirit still influences our souls,

when God gives new knowledge of our sin and His grace and thus illumines or enlightens us, Eph. 1:17. But this influence comes to us through the means of the Word of God as written, preached, or committed to memory. . The operation of the Holy Spirit upon the prophets and apostles was immediate, and transpired for a certain purpose. The Holy Spirit influenced their souls without any means or instruments, and did so for the purpose that they might in an absolutely reliable and dependable way fix in writing His word which is valid for all men and all times. This was a unique operation of the Spirit of God upon the sacred scribes, which can not be placed in the same class with the illumination of Christians which still goes on.

The Holy Spirit introduced the **thoughts** to their souls which they were to express; He also provided the use of the proper **words**, in order properly and correctly to express these thoughts. For we have our thoughts only in the form of words, just as we have the soul of man only in his body. The word gives to the thought its form and body. Only by means of the word does it receive its value for others, for whom the thoughts do not exist until they have been expressed in words. Thus also the operation of the Holy Spirit only upon the thoughts of the prophets and apostles would have been insufficient, it must also include the word, in order to be the inerrant reproduction of the inspired thoughts. Paul expresses this as his own experience, 1 Cor. 2:9—13: in his apostolic calling he spoke in words which the "Holy Ghost teacheth." If the Holy Spirit gave him the proper words for his oral preaching then surely also for his written preaching. Thus it was the Holy Ghost who spoke through him. Not as though the prophets and apostles had ceased to think, speak, search. They did this with all diligence, for they were living personalities and not mere dead trumpets, through which the wind of the Spirit blew, nor yet inanimate machines which only wrote what was dictated without any inner participation on their part. The Holy Spirit pervaded their entire being, thought and speech, like a celestial electrical current, so that everything which for the purpose of fixing in writing they thought and formulated in words in truth was their thinking and their words, and yet it was born entirely out of the light of the Holy Spirit which filled their being, so that they thought and spoke nothing except what coincided with the Holy Spirit. If He had not fully pervaded them, lifted them up beyond themselves, freed them from all human fallaciousness and not introduced divine truth to their minds in specific thoughts and terms, the thoughts and words as the

Holy Scriptures contain them would never have come to pass. And the Holy Spirit employed them as they were. He did not destroy their peculiarities. He did not transform the keen dialectical Paul into a meditative John and vice versa, nor did He at once elevate the Greek which they wrote to the heights of classical purity. No, rather did He use them in their entire personality just as they were by birth and development. This accounts for the divergence in thought and speech between Isaiah and Jeremiah, John and Paul, James and Peter. But the Holy Spirit thus filled and controlled them and gave to their mind, so that everything which they spoke was His thought and speech. As in the person of Jesus Christ true God and true man are so united, that His is a true, genuine, and entire human life, a gradual inner development, a real suffering and death, and yet in all this and on every round it is the true God who was born, lived, suffered, died; and as it is Jesus' divinity which pervades His humanity in all things and renders it almighty, omnipresent, etc., and yet withal His humanity is humanity, thus also in a way the Holy Spirit pervaded and ruled the spirit of the scribes so that everything which their spirit thought, and shaped in words, and fixed in writing, poured forth from nothing else, was controlled by nothing else than by the Holy Spirit.

Therefore no man can lay down articles of faith or rules for Christian conduct, except the Bible, and the Bible only, not men, not even the fathers of the Church, nor yet the pope. And everything great which the Bible tells us about the Word of God pertains to the Bible itself; compare especially Ps. 19:7—11; Ps. 119; Isaiah 8:20—22; 55:10, 11; Jer. 23:29; Luke 11:28; Matth. 7:21; 24:35; John 5:39; 8:31, 32; Rom. 1:16, 17; 2 Cor. 2:15, 16; Hebr. 4:12; 1 Peter 1:23—25, etc. Thus we have in mind not only the preached but also the written word when we pray,

“Teach me to love Thy sacred Word,
And view my Savior there.”

Indeed, we think of the preached word only in so far as it conforms to the written word. Scripture, and Scripture only! is one of the fundamental principles of the Lu-

theran Church and all true children of the Reformation. And because the Bible is God's Word to men, we call it the "Bible," i. e., the book of books, or the Holy Scripture.

Questions. 1. What facts above all others demonstrate that the Bible is a book unlike any other?—2. What of this, that has thus far been said to the glory of the Bible, in its final analysis is due to the fact that the Bible is the Word of God?—3. How do we know that the Bible is the Word of God?—4. What is expressly told us of some of its chapters?—5. As whose word are some of the Old Testament passages expressly introduced in the New Testament?—6. Mention passages of the New Testament where this is done.—7. How did Jesus speak of the Old Testament?—8. What does St. Paul say of the Old Testament?—9. What does St. Peter say of the sacred writers of the Old Testament?—10. What must the New Testament be if the Old Testament is the Word of God?—11. Who wrote the New Testament?—12. What promise did Jesus give the apostles for their entire apostolic work?—13. If this promise is given them for their entire apostolic work which phase of their work is then surely included?—14. What is the operation of the Holy Spirit called, when He influenced the prophets and apostles, so that their writings became God's Word?—15. Where does this term originate?—16. What is the relation of Inspiration to the operation of the Holy Ghost with which to the present day He still illumines Christians?—17. What did the Holy Spirit give to the spirit of the prophets and apostles, so that their writings might in truth be God's Word?—18. Why was it necessary that the Holy Spirit also gave them the terms to use?—19. Where does the apostle himself declare that he speaks in words which the Holy Ghost teaches?—20. He says this of the word which he preached; of what other word must this also have been true?—21. But how must the sacred writers not be regarded even though the Holy Spirit introduced both the thoughts and the words which they wrote to their minds?—22. What, for instance, shows that the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in no-wise curtailed or stopped the mental activity of the writers?—23. But what were they lifted above for the purpose of their writing so that the Scriptures might lose nothing of their dependability because of their co-operation?—24. Where did the divine pervade the human in a similar way and make it wholly divine even as here the inspiration of the Spirit completely saturated the human writers?—25. But how can the Scriptures say, "the sun rises," or "the sun sets," if the Spirit of God also put the word into the soul of the writers, since we know that the sun neither rises nor sets, but is stationary and only turns about its own axis?—26. What will and must the Scriptures be for the Christian because it is the Word of God?—27. To what questions does the Bible intend to give answers?—28. What must be said of the opinion,

that human reason, or the church fathers, or the pope determine what must be believed and how a Christian life must be conducted?—29. Even the word that is preached is dependable only in how far?—30. Who brought this truth to light again that only the Word of God can determine articles of faith and give rules for Christian conduct?—31. Upon what must we, therefore, insist if we would be and remain true children of the Reformation?

We append the testimony of men regarded as great and wise in the world concerning the meaning and power of the Bible. Though they do not all rise to the conviction, "The Bible is God's Word," yet they encourage us to read the Bible regularly and attentively. The philosopher Kant (died 1804), "All books which I have read have not given me the comfort which I found in the words, 'and though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death,' etc. (Ps. 23:4)." —The Emperor Napoleon, when a prisoner on the island of St. Helena (died 1821), "The gospel possesses a secret virtue, something powerfully efficacious, a warmth, which penetrates the heart while it influences the understanding. It is not a book, it is a living being endued with a power, that vanquishes everything that opposes it. I never tire to read it, and do so daily with great pleasure. The soul conquered by the beauty of the gospel no longer belongs to itself. God takes charge of it entirely; He guides its thoughts and all its faculties; it is His."—W. von Humboldt, the great statesman and linguist (died 1835), "The reading of the Bible is an infinite and, perhaps, the surest source of consolation. I know of nothing to compare with it."—The poet Goethe (died 1832), "After all their roundabout ways the wisest men always return to the Bible. The more men progress in culture, the more the Bible will be used in part as the fundament, in part as the means of education, of course not by the malapert, but by truly wise."—Sir Walter Scott, the author (died 1832), while on his deathbed begged to be read to 'from the book.' When asked, 'from what book?' he answered, 'there is but one, the Bible.'—The novelist, Charles Dickens (died 1870), wrote to his son in substance, "Most anxiously and cordially would I hold up to you the inestimable value of the New Testament and the study of this book as an infallible guide for life. As long as you value it and bow down before the person of our Savior, you can never seriously err. These things have accompanied me through life."—The historian Wolfgang Menzel (died 1873), "The Bible is the book of books, the source of eternal life, of comfort and of strength for all unfortunate and tempted, a shield and weapon for the innocent, an awakener for the spiritually asleep, a leader out of the labyrinth of sin, a terrible judgment for those who remain

in sin. A book with which no other can be compared. For there is no book, whose content is like the eye of God searching the very depths of the soul, which is so intrinsically true. The Bible is wiser than all books of learning and doctrine, more beautiful than all poesy of the world, more heart-searching than the speech of mothers, and yet of such depths of the spirit, that even the most erudite can not exhaust it, open even to the simplest, and elevating and purifying to the most cultured and refined. It is a supernatural light, glowing with more than the heat of the sun, an inspiration of the eternal, calling forth a deep home-sickness in the soul of the happy one revelling in rare delight, and filling the sufferer in deepest earthly distress with inexpressible joy. It is the word of the beyond, which caused Belshazzar to quake (Dan. 5:5, 6) and in the presence of which even St. Paul grew speechless and blind (Acts 9:6-9). It is the word which binds and loosens, slays and makes alive."—The celebrated scholar and philosopher G. Th. Fechner (died 1887), "I once entered a city with houses and palaces of brick, stones, and marble, all of them systematically and regularly built, well put together, and one surpassing the other in ornamentation. In its midst there stood a hut, unsightly, unsuited to any human purpose, with cracks and crevices and dark corners, not one thing fitting to the other. It lacked rooms, pillars, supports, a wonder that it stood. And I laughed at the hut, this remnant of a half barbarian age in a city of beauty and wealth, and said, 'Tomorrow it will be a ruin!' And when I returned after an hundred years, all the houses and palaces were in ruins, or were remodelled, and others stood at other places according to new rules for new purposes. The old hut, however, still stood at the same place with all its cracks and crevices and dark corners, exactly the same as an hundred years ago, as though the tooth of time, which gnaws all other things, here itself were gnawed. And again after one hundred years, and yet again after one hundred years, and 'twas always the same: the same hut in the midst of new environment. Then I said, 'It is held by the power of God!'—And from the houses and palaces there came many sick and wearied ones, and languished and faded in the streets, and could not recover, and no physician could help. But whoever went into the hut, itself seemingly in need of the physician, became happy and well. Then I said, 'Here is the salvation of God!' And when I entered the hut, I saw One who laid His hand on the sick and weary, and they became well. And I recognized the Christ.—The aged hut, unsuited to human purposes, badly put together according to notions of men, with its cracks and

crevices and dark corners, lacking rooms and pillars and supports, is the Holy Scriptures. We observe it with human reason; what is there enduring about it; what does it not offer for the ridicule of the scornful; how can it maintain its place in the wondrous variety of writings, with beautiful and finely moulded sentences, replete with human wisdom and well connected and clearly proven propositions? Can it vie with any of these? And yet all of these writings, the most beautiful and erudite, ecclaiming the eternal of their teachings, fall into decay, and step aside for others with other and newer teaching. But the Holy Scriptures abide and will abide, and the spirit of Jesus, its Lord and guardian, will ever again make joyous and well all who come to Him, sick and weary, because they first erred about outside and for so long a time."

Questions. Review what has thus far been taught concerning the Bible; discuss in detail the pronouncements of celebrated men concerning the Bible, so that they may be fully understood; emphasize the fact that for the Christian, and especially the Lutheran Christian, there is nothing more self-evident than in all questions of faith and morals to ask, "What do the Scriptures say?"

3. How the Bible Must Be Read.

It is needless to say that every Christian will gladly and diligently read his Bible. What can there be more beautiful and blessed for him, who is a child of God, than to hear the voice of his eternal Father? As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth his soul after God and His Word (Ps. 42: 1, 2). And where his own desire grows weak, the commandment of God ought to impel him diligently to read and meditate upon God's Word. How the Jews were to make themselves conversant with the law we can read Deut. 6: 6—9; how the prophets admonished the people to study the Word of God is seen from Isaiah 8: 20—22 and 12: 3; how the people of Bê rē'â studied the Old Testament is evident from Acts 17: 11; and how the Lord encouraged Pharisees and rabbis to search the Scriptures is written John 5: 39. To continue in Jē'sus' word and doctrine is the explicit will of the Lord (John 8: 31, 32), and Paul's express exhortation to Timothy (1 Tim. 4: 13; 2 Tim. 1: 13). Of the early Christians we are told, "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2: 42). That includes the diligent use of the Holy

Scriptures. If we earnestly heed Jē'sus' word, then we have chosen the better part (Luke 10:42).

But how must the Bible be read, so that we may enjoy its blessings, and it may become for us profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16)?

1. We must turn to it prayerfully, and wait upon God.

Before reading we must pray: Lord, may my reading be a blessing for me; open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law and Thy grace; help me properly to understand Thy Word, apply it to myself, and take it to heart! And we must wait upon God. We can not always lock our external chambers, and do not need to; but the closet of our hearts must ever be locked when we take our Bible, in order that nothing may draw us away and make us distracted (Matth. 6:6). Where the heart does not wait upon God, God can not fill it with the blessing which He would give us in our reading of His Word. Only in the quiet, calmly flowing water can the sun mirror himself and penetrate the entire body with his warmth. It is true also of the light of the divine Word.

As the tender flowers, willingly unfolding,
To the sun their visage holding,
Even so
Let me do,
Light from Thee obtaining
And in fervor gaining.

2. We must pause after each section, and try to grasp the main thoughts. Rapid reading without pausing and pondering neither leads to the proper understanding nor helps to fix in the memory what has been read. But when we stop and ponder over what we read, then we see one light after another, and the matter becomes clearer and clearer. In order to facilitate such pausing our Bibles indicate the

beginning of new sections with a letter in bold type. Especially when we read the discourses of Jē'sus and the epistles of the apostles we must try to grasp the main thought of each section. This involves some thinking, and is not always quite easy; but the more we practice it, the easier and surer it becomes. When a section contains some especially important single passages—many Bibles indicate these by bold type—it is well to give to these especial attention. In order fully to grasp their meaning it is well to ask questions, and answer them ourselves. Thus in reading Matth. 11:28—30 we might ask, Who calls thus? The Savior. To whom does He speak? To the Jews. Whom among the Jews does He call to Himself? Those that labor and are heavy laden. Who is it, that labors and is heavy laden? One whose life is burdened with much care and work. What were the Jews burdened with? With the law. Why were they so burdened with the law? Because they tried to fulfill it, and thus become righteous before God. Did they fulfill it? No. They labored under it as under a heavy burden, which they put upon themselves. What does Jē'sus call to them who labor under the law and feel burdened as under a heavy load? They should come to Him. What would Christ do for them? He would give them rest. What does that mean? He would give them peace in their soul. What would He do with their transgression of the law? He would cover it, and forgive their sins. Should the law then still continue to burden them? No, He makes them free of the curse and coercion of the law (Gal. 3:13; 1 Tim. 1:19). Can they now live as they please? No. What is there also for the followers of Jē'sus, and must be borne? A yoke. What does Jē'sus say of His yoke? It is easy and light. And how is He Himself, the Lord of the disciples of Jē'sus? He is meek and lowly in heart. Surely, it is good to be with such a Lord, though we must learn from Him and live according to His will. What ought all Jews to have done? They ought

to have cast aside the yoke of the law and come to Jē'sus. And what would they have found with Him? Rest for their souls. And what else? A kind and lovely Lord, who is served with pleasure.—This example also shows how we must place ourselves into the times in which the Bible verse was written, and learn to know the people, to whom it was addressed, in order the better to understand it.

Questions. 1. What should fill the heart of the Christian with sincere desire diligently to read and meditate upon the Holy Scriptures?—2. And what should impel the Christian if this desire threatens to weaken?—3. Where does Moses demand that Jews should make themselves conversant with the law?—4. What does Isaiah 8: 20—22 teach concerning diligent use of the Scriptures?—5. How can we learn from the earliest times of the Church that to be a Christian and diligently to use the Word of God were convertible concepts?—6. What do the Acts of the Apostles mention especially of the people of Berea?—7. How did Paul admonish Timothy in this respect?—8. How can we see that Jesus diligently used the Old Testament, the Bible of the Jews?—9. What is found in the Holy Scriptures, according to His verdict, if we will only diligently search them?—10. What motives, of course, must not impel us to read the Bible?—11. Rather for what purpose should we diligently read the Scriptures according to 2 Tim. 3: 16?—12. How must it be used if we expect a blessing from its use?—13. How must our heart have become if we expect a deep and lasting benefit?—14. What must we do when we have finished reading a chapter?—15. What questions, for instance, would it be well to ask after reading Matth. 11: 28—30?—16. Or after reading Isaiah 5: 1—13?—17. Or Isaiah 53: 1—12?—18. Or John 1: 1—18?—19. Or Rom. 3: 21—28?—20. Or Phil. 2: 1—11?

3. We must apply everything which the Bible says to ourselves, and completely surrender ourselves to it. If now we have come to the understanding of a Bible verse or a larger section, we must apply its truth to our own lives, by asking, What does this mean for *me*? If it contains a comfort, we must grasp it in faith, and console ourselves, or remember it against that day when we need it. If it contains an admonition, we must take it to heart and do what God demands of us. If it contains a warning, we must be warned, and avoid the evil. If it contains a reproof, we must bow down before the reproof, and willingly take it upon ourselves, repent of our sins and begin a new life. If a section admonishes and warns us, we must especially remember

Matth. 7: 21—23, 24—28, and James 1: 22—26; if it reproves and corrects us, we must remember what James says (1: 21), "Receive with meekness the engrafted word," for men are prone to resent and become grieved over the word instead over themselves and their sins. And yet only then can the Bible lead us to life and become for us a power of good, when we accept its correction, and completely surrender ourselves to its word, as Dā'vid did when Nā'than said to him, "Thou art the man!" (2 Sam. 12:7).

4. Rather than take offense at what we do not yet understand, we should cling to that which is clear and plain to us. We must not expect to understand every passage of the Bible at once; for though the Bible on the whole is quite clear and plain, yet it contains many difficult passages, which we only gradually come to understand. The longer and more faithfully we read, the more we ponder over what we have read, the more we compare Scripture with Scripture, and the more willing we grow completely to surrender ourselves to the Bible truths, and not mix them with our own human thoughts, the clearer it becomes to us. Here then it behooves us to become patient and faithful, and not be hasty in our opinion or condemnation. If we do not yet fully comprehend Rom. 9—11, then let us cling to John 3: 16; 6: 37, 40; if Rom. 3: 25, 26 is still obscure, let us hold fast to 1 John 1: 7. If it is still a task for us to follow the logic of St. Paul's epistles, then let us all the more search the four gospels. If the prophets are difficult for us, then let us read the psalms. If the Old Testament causes too much trouble, let us primarily consider the New. Above all things, do not lose your confidence in the Scriptures because you find passages, that seem to offend. God certainly knew His thoughts, when He caused them to be written and incorporated in the Bible, and His thoughts are always holy and good, even if they pass our understanding. The eye of the father has a wider range than the eye of the child. God's eye has a still wider range than

the eye of short-sighted man. Here in this life already the truth of the Bible becomes clear to me, and the great above will solve all riddles. "Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor. 13:12).

The more faithfully we read the Bible the more innerly certain will we become that it is the Word of God and truth. The Holy Spirit will ever more and more persuade us, that we do not only repeat what other people have said, but express what we ourselves have experienced. "Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves" (John 4:42).

O read your Bible ev'ry day,
It is your trusty staff and stay.
Seek in it peace and true repose
Until in death your eyes shall close.

Questions. 1. What is the first thing to be done in order properly to use the Bible?—2. What is the next?—3. Both of these, however, will not further a person in his Christian life unless he does a third thing, namely what?—4. What does it mean, we must apply the word to ourselves?—5. What must we do, therefore, if the chapter we read contains a comfort?—6. What must we do if it contains an admonition?—7. What if it contains a warning?—8. What must we do if it is a reproof?—9. Where do the Scriptures say that all our reading and hearing of the Word of God helps nothing unless we use it to better ourselves?—10. Of what should we take no offense when we have begun to read the Bible?—11. With which passages should we compare obscure passages in order the better to understand them?—12. Which little book of Luther gives a true guide for the entire Bible?—13. What should we not lose if even then individual parts of the Bible remain dark and obscure for us?—14. To which parts should we cling all the more?—15. What can we trust to God in regard to the obscure passages?—16. When did we receive an inner certainty of the truths which the Bible contains?—17. Which is the way to such inner certainty?

The Old Testament.

The Preparation of Salvation.

A. Historical Books.

The Old Testament contains 17 historical books, namely: The Five Books of Mō'ses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy), Jōsh'u'ā, Judges, Ruth, 2 Books of Sām'u'el, 2 Books of Kings, 2 Books of Chronicles, Ezra, Nēhē mī'ah, and Esther. These 17 historical books tell us how God chose the people of Īs'rā'el from the midst of fallen mankind, and during the course of a long history prepared them for salvation in Jē'sus Christ.

The Bible has a different way of telling the history of mankind and the people of Īs'rā'el than is common among historians. These latter exalt the great deeds of a people and its important men. It is always man whom they place in the forefront. The Bible, however, emphasizes what God did for mankind and the people of Īs'rā'el. However much it speaks of human leaders, great heroes and kings, and follows the development of Īs'rā'el down to the minutest details, yet God is always the chief person, and His deeds for men the principal facts. Thus the 17 historical books of the Old Testament depict how God prepared Īs'rā'el for salvation in Jē'sus Christ.

The Bible also shows men and the conditions of a people in their true light, no better and no worse than they deserve. It is veracious through and through. For this reason it neither covers up nor glosses over the sins of men. Rather does it speak of them with great frankness. It neither ignores Ā'brā hām's prevarication, Jā'cob's deception, nor the far-reaching and grievous idolatry of Īs'rā'el during the period of the kings. But it does not gloat over these things. It

speaks of them in such a way that we must see how God is opposed to sin (Ps. 5:4) and must punish it, and how it leads men to destruction (Prov. 14:34). It speaks of these things in such a way that we must abhor and hate them.

THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES.

The five books of Mō'ses (Pentateuch = five books) received their name from Mō'ses, the great man of God, who also wrote them or at least the greatest part of them. They tell us how from the midst of fallen mankind God selected the people of Īs'ra'el as His chosen people and gave them the law through Mō'ses.

The First Book of Mō'ses (Genesis = Book of Origins) contains the story of mankind from creation to the dispersion into all lands (chapters 1—11), and the history of the patriarchs of Īs'ra'el to the death of Jō'seph (chapters 12—50).

The Second Book of Mō'ses (Exodus = Book of Departure) narrates the journey of Īs'ra'el from Ê'gýpt (chapters 1—18), and the proclamation of the law on Sī'nāi (chapters 19—40).

The Third Book of Mō'ses (Leviticus = Book of the Order of Priests) contains detailed regulations concerning the order of worship (chapters 1—10 sacrifices and priesthood, chapters 23—25 feast days and feast times), and the civic life of Īs'ra'el.

The Fourth Book of Mō'ses (Numbers = Book of the Census; compare chapters 1—2) includes various regulations (especially chapters 4 and 5, 28—30), but also tells about the further journey of Īs'ra'el through the desert to the boundary of Cā'nāan.

The Fifth Book of Mō'ses (Deuteronomy = Book of the Repetition of the Law) relates the last discourses of Mō'ses to the people of Īs'ra'el, in which he reviews the most important sections of the Law, and promises the blessings of

God for the obedient and the curse of God for the disobedient. It concludes with the account of Mō'ses' death.

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES.

The First Book of Mō'ses is divided into two parts, chapters 1—11 and 12—50. The first part tells us the story of mankind from creation to the dispersion into all lands; the second the story of the ancestors (patriarchs) of the people of Īs'ra'el to Jō'seph's death.

The first part treats of the story of the entire race, the second only of the story of the ancestors of a single people. The originally wide circle narrows down to one people, and then to the end of the Old Testament is limited to this one people, until in the New Testament it expands in Christ and embraces the whole of mankind (Matth. 28: 19). Thus the First Book of Mō'ses is truly fundamental, for it lays the foundation, without which we would not understand the history of the human race, on which the whole Old Testament and the history of Īs'ra'el is builded, and to which the New Testament connects, when it shows the faith in the grace of God as the only true way of salvation.

The first part of the First Book of Mō'ses again is divided into three sections, for 1: 1—2: 3 describes the creation of heaven and earth; in 2: 4—8: 14 the story of man to the flood or deluge (creation of man; Paradise and the office of man; the fall; God's judgment and promise; the fearful growth of sin among men; the deluge); in 8: 15—11: 32 the story of the race after the deluge to the dispersion into all lands and the selection of Ā'brā hām (God makes a new beginning in history with Nō'ah, the sin of Hām, the blessing for Shēm and Jā'pheth, and the curse for Hām, the descendants of Shēm, Hām, and Jā'pheth, the building of Bā'bel, the confusion of tongues and the dispersion, the calling of Ā'brā hām).

Questions. 1. Into what two great divisions is the entire Bible divided?—2. What three chief classes of books do we distinguish in the Old Testament?—3. How many historical books does the

Old Testament include?—4. Enumerate them in their order.—5. What do these 17 historical books of the Old Testament tell us?—6. What is the difference between the way in which the Bible narrates history and the way in which the books of men do it?—7. Where else does this difference become apparent?—8. The Bible tells us about the sins of men because it is truthful in all things; but for what other purpose does it also tell us of them?—9. With which historical books does the Old Testament begin?—10. Why do these books receive their name from Moses?—11. What do they tell?—12. What does the first book of Moses, Genesis, treat of?—13. Why is it called Genesis?—14. Of what does the second book of Moses, Exodus, treat?—15. Why is it called Exodus?—16. Of what does the third book of Moses, Leviticus, treat?—17. Why is it called Leviticus?—18. Of what does the fourth book of Moses, Numbers, treat?—19. Why is it called Numbers?—20. What does the fifth book of Moses, Deuteronomy, contain?—21. Why is it called Deuteronomy?—22. Into how many parts is the first book of Moses, Genesis, divided?—23. What does the first part tell us about?—24. The second part?—25. Does the circle thus, of which these two parts tell us, grow from a wider to a narrower or a narrower to a wider one?—26. When does the narrow circle again become wider, so as to include the entire human race?—27. In how far can the Book of Genesis be called truly fundamental?—28. Into which three parts is the first part of the Book of Genesis again divided?—29. What does the first part tell?—30. The second?—31. The third?

1. Creation of heaven and earth. Read Genesis 1:1—31 and 2:1—3. The Bible begins with the account of the creation of the world, so that we might know how the world, in which we live and of which we form a part, came to be. The world is not eternal. It had a beginning. God only is eternal (Ps. 90:2). Neither did it originate by accident. The eternal God created it through His word (i. e., as an act of His free will, Rev. 4:11), thus calling it from non-being into being. First God created the **materia** (heaven and earth, verse 1), and then in six days moulded it into this beautiful world, of which He Himself at its completion said that it was very good (verse 31). This God also brought about by means of His word (verses 3, 6, 9, etc.). During the first three days He **separated** what until then had been undivided, light and darkness, the waters above and the waters below, water and dry land. He first created light, since there can be neither life, growth, nor development without light. In separating the waters above from the waters below, and the water and dry land, He created the **great spheres** in which later on the living being should grow, move, and develop: the sky, the oceans, and the dry land. After He had caused vegetation and plant-life to cover the earth, He **peopled** the created sections from the 4. to the 6. day. He put into the sky he sun, moon, and the many thousands

of stars, in which He gathered the light, made on the first day, and through which He maintains all living things on earth, and regulates them for this life (verse 14); He put fishes and birds into the waters and the air; the dry land He filled with all kinds of beasts.

When the earth was thus prepared, God also created **man**. He did not create him, however, until He had prepared a place of residence for Him, and provided for the means of his subsistence; and He did not create him sooner for another reason, because man was to be His masterpiece and the crowning glory of the entire creation, and at the same time, the master and king over all things on earth. Since man was destined to take such high rank, God took a special resolution in the midst of His work of creation (verse 26); for this reason He Himself took hold and moulded man's body from the moist dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7), and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, so that not only his body became animate and living, but that he was also formed in the image of God (verses 26 and 27), i. e., became a being with the faculty of knowing, feeling, and willing, like God, and one that was true in its knowledge, blessed in its feeling, righteous and holy in its willing (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). Since man was made according to the image of God, he is also the connecting link between heaven and earth: according to his body he belongs to this earth, but according to his spirit he belongs to the world above. Read Ps. 8, which describes the lofty station of man in verses 4—9.

The seventh day marks the "rest of God." It is not an indolent or inactive rest, for God now, too, works and acts, for He maintains and governs the world made by Him (John 5:17). But compared with the six days of creation it is a rest, for He now no longer creates new things.

Since God created the world, He is also its lord, so that nothing in the world can harm me without His consent (Ps. 73:25, 26; Rom. 8:31). Luther says, "Since God is almighty, what can I lack that He would not give nor do? Since He is the creator of heaven and earth and the lord over all things, who will take from me or grieve me?"—Read Ps. 104, this eulogy of creation!

God did not only create the visible world but also the invisible world. **Angels**, too, are His handiwork, Col. 1:16, even though we do not know the day on which He called them into being. As all things were good, when they left His hands (verse 31), thus they, too, originally were good. Gen. 3, however, shows that they did not all remain so. But the Bible nowhere clearly informs us how angels came to fall (not even in John 8:44; Luke 10:18; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6).

It does not tell us, because, however interesting it may be for us to ponder over this, it is not necessary for our salvation. The Bible would show us the way to life, but does not attempt to answer every question however interesting it may be.

Nor does the Bible intend to instruct us on questions relating to natural science, although what in broad outlines it says about the genesis of the world will prove to be true even for natural science. Alexander von Humboldt (died 1859), the great scientist of modern times, says, "The first chapter of Genesis contains more natural science than many a voluminous compend of geology." The astronomer Biot (died 1862) says with reference to the same chapter, "Either Moses had the same scientific experience as our own age, or he was inspired." The geologist Bischof (died 1870), "Moses was led to truth by divine guidance." The Bible nowhere explicitly states the age of the human race; but when all her data are added, the result is about 6,000 years. This is ridiculed by many today, who claim it is hundreds of thousands of years old. But Baer (died 1876), one of the greatest of scholars, declares, "When scientists accord to mankind hundreds of thousands of years, their opinion lacks every reasonable foundation. I do not attribute a greater age to man than the biblical account states." And the geologist Quenstedt (died 1889), claims, that there is much to be said in favor of about 6,000 years, and that Gen. 1 is so true that Moses must have been the greatest geologist of all times.

Questions. 1. Into how many chief parts is the Book of Genesis divided?—2. How far does the first chief part extend?—3. Into how many subdivisions is this part divided?—4. How far does the first of these subdivisions extend?—5. Of what does it treat?—6. Why does the Bible begin with the creation of heaven and earth?—7. Nowadays it is claimed that the world always existed; what do the Scriptures say?—8. Who only is eternal according to the Scriptures?—9. Which psalm expresses this so beautifully that God was before heaven and earth were created?—10. What is the comforting conclusion which the psalm draws from this?—11. How did the world originate according to the Bible?—12. What does it mean, God created the world through His word?—13. What do we call God because as a free act of His will He called the world from non-existence into being?—14. What did God first call into being through His word?—15. What did He then do in six days?—16. By means of what did He mold this form of the world out of matter?—17. What is to be said, therefore, of the claim that the world gradually evolved out of eternal matter or germs?—18. What did God do during the first three days, in order to shape our beautiful world from matter?—19. Show what He separated from each other?—20. What did He do from the fourth to the sixth day?—21. Why did He create man last of all?—22. Thus one can, indeed, discern a development from a lower to a higher; but what is the difference between this

development or evolution of which the Bible speaks, and the evolution of which infidelity speaks?—23. How does the creation of man show that this is something special?—24. What is the chief difference between man and beast according to the Scriptures?—25. What does it mean, that man is created in the image of God?—26. In what respect can you say that man is the living connection between heaven and earth?—27. How must it be understood when the Bible says, that God rested on the 7th day?—28. Whom does the invisible world include which God created?—29. Who are the angels?—30. How were they when they came from the hand of God?—31. What is the opinion even of many scientists of this biblical record of the creation?—32. Does the biblical account require such confirmation of science in order to be true and dependable?—33. The first article of the Christian faith declares, that we can only retain the truth that God created the world through what?—34. Which blessed comfort does such faith bring?

2. Paradise and the office of man. Read Gen. 2:8—25. Gen. 2:4. It marks the beginning of the history of man. For this reason the earth as the domicile of man is briefly described and the creation of man again recorded (2:4—7). God gave to man Paradise (= unfenced garden, park) in the land of Eden (= land of joy) as his place of residence. From here he was to subdue the whole earth. As the name implies, this was a place of marked beauty. We do not positively know where it was situated; yet the names of the two rivers, Hiddekel (= Tigris) and Euphrates either indicate the Armenian plateau or South Babylonia. The blessedness of man in paradise included not only his beautiful place of residence (verses 8—15), where he could eat of the luscious fruits of the garden (verses 9, 16) and rule over all the animals as a king (verses 19, 20; Gen. 1:28), and that God gave him Eve as a fitting helpmeet with whom he could speak and exchange thoughts, thus establishing marriage and blessing it (verses 18—24); but included above all things the communion with God, where God spoke with him as a father speaks with his child, and that He did not burden his life with many commandments, but only gave him one in order to test his gratitude and faith (verse 17).

Man's **office** was twofold, physical and spiritual. a) He should cultivate and guard the garden (verse 15), and ever more and more govern the world (Gen. 1:28), he should also bring forth children, and replenish the earth (Gen. 1:28). Thus work is not the product of sin, but rather did God ordain from the very beginning that men should work. Sin only served to make work burdensome and laborious (Gen. 3:17—19). Marriage was also instituted in paradise (Gen. 2:21—24), and must therefore at all times be revered as an institution of God. Nothing serves so much to demoralize a people as the desecration of marriage. Marriage is to fulfill the earth (Gen.

1:28). It was established for this purpose. b) Man should also learn to know God more and more and in the full exercise of his freedom grow into His holy will. He was righteous and good, for God had made him so. But now it should become manifest whether he would remain righteous and good. God would not force him, for an obedience obtained by force has no value in His sight. For this reason God would test man. And in order to test him, God gave him the commandment Gen. 2:17. If in the free exercise of his will man would decide for God and the good, then God would so fortify him in the good that sin would become impossible.

Adam and Eve are the progenitors of the human family, so that all human races have a common ancestor (Acts 17:26). In former days science often ridiculed this proposition, today it is self-evident. Thus science many times becomes enmeshed in contradictions, and yet it demands an unhesitant obedience!

Questions. 1. How far does the first part of the Book of Genesis extend?—2. How many subdivisions does it contain?—3. How far does the first of these extend?—4. Of what does it treat?—5. How far does the second extend?—6. Which stories does it include?—7. Where is the story of Paradise and the object of man recorded?—8. What do you notice at once as you pass from Genesis 1:1—2:3 to Gen. 2:4—7?—9. Why is the earth here described and the creation of man told again and much more in detail?—10. What will you answer them who say the Bible contains a twofold and contradictory record of creation?—11. What was to be the domicile and living place of man from which he should subjugate the entire earth?—12. What can you infer from the name Paradise and Eden as to the character of this domicile?—13. What does Gen. 2:10—14 show as to the location of Paradise?—14. How is it that we are unable to make positive statements concerning the location of Paradise even though the Bible gives us the exact facts, Gen. 2:10—14?—15. What were the outstanding traits in the happiness of the first human beings in Paradise?—16. Without which one of these traits would all the happiness in Paradise have been no true and enduring happiness?—17. What did God institute when He gave Eve to Adam as his helpmeet?—18. Which Church forgets that marriage was already ordained with creation?—19. Against what do all such sin who trifle with marriage or even grossly violate it?—20. What was the office that God gave to man?—21. What was his twofold physical office?—22. How then must work be regarded on earth?—23. What is it due to that it is often so hard and laborious?—24. What is one of the chief objects of marriage according to Gen. 1:28?—25. What do all such married people sin against who will have nothing of this?—26. What was the spiritual office of man?—27. Was not man pure and good, righteous and holy when he came forth from the creative hand of God?—28. Wherein then could and should his spiritual development consist?—29. How should such spiritual development come to pass according to God's will?—30. What would

have come to be with man had he in the free exercise of his will decided for obedience against God's command?—31. What must be said of all men on earth according to Gen. 1 and 2, and Acts 17:26?—32. How does this fact again show that great caution is necessary over against the assertions of science, opposed to the Bible?

3. **The fall of man.** Read Gen. 3:1—13. Sin envelops us on all sides and challenges our valour from the cradle to the grave. The Bible alone tells of its origin. It is claimed, indeed, that the account Gen. 3 is not reliable, but John 8:44; 2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:13—14; Rom. 5:12, 16—19; Rev. 12:9; 20:2 show that the Lord and His apostles accepted it as true and reliable and as the account of a real occurrence. That is sufficient for us. According to this biblical account sin was not produced by man of himself, but was carried into his life from the outside. Sin originated with the Devil (Satan = adversary, enemy of God and man; Devil = slanderer, accuser of men before God). For the Devil spoke through the serpent and tempted Eve to sin (John 8:44; 2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9; 20:2). But though the temptation to sin came from the Devil, yet man is also guilty, for he had the power to withstand the Devil. It was God's will that he should withstand the Devil (James 4:7). If the fall of man had not also been the fault of man God would surely not have punished him. And since sin did not originate with man, but, like a strange factor, was carried into his life, he can also be redeemed again from sin, and in the moment of his blessed death it is taken away from him entirely. For the Devil, however, there is no redemption in all eternity, for he himself called sin into being, and himself became sin.

The Devil tempted Eve to sin, first of all by calling in question the commandment of God. When he did not succeed in this, he endeavored to villify God's motives. He said, "God did not give this commandment as an expression of His love, and to preserve you from death, but because He is envious. He does not want you to be as He is, so that you, too, might know what is good and evil. Only by transgressing His commandment, can you come to true blessedness." The Devil thereby attempted to shake Eve's trust in God and to arouse in her the suspicion, that God begrudges and hence withholds from her the best. And as soon as Eve began to distrust God's love, sin had already gained entrance to her heart. Instead of believing God and trusting that His love seeks her welfare only even in this prohibition, she began to believe the Devil. Since the fruit which was to make them as gods was pleasant also to the eye (verse 6), it became all the easier for Eve to sin. But this would not have happened, if she had not previously lost her faith, i. e., her trust in

God's love, and permitted to be led to a wrong belief, namely that by transgressing the divine commandment she would reach a great good, and true happiness. **Unbelief** is the root of all sin. But instead of reaching true happiness through sin, Eve was bitterly disappointed. She lost the communion with God and did not reach the expected godlike knowledge of good and evil. What she and Adam saw was only their sin.—Thus the Devil proceeds to the present day when he attempts to lead us to sin. He questions the truth of the Word of God; he destroys confidence in God's love, he represents the forbidden object as the greatest good; and when we have done his will, and reached out after what was forbidden, we are disappointed. We lost God and His blessedness, in place of happiness loathing takes possession of our soul, and the Devil mocks us for our foolishness. That is the deception of sin (Gen. 3:13; Hebr. 3:13; explanation of the 6th Petition).

The sin of the first parents was no "small and easy" sin, as is sometimes said. On the contrary, it was a great and grievous sin. For Adam and Eve stood in blessed communion with God, enveloped by His pleasure, they possessed a lofty knowledge of God and His holy will, they also possessed the power to withstand the Devil, and God had given them only one commandment. They were bound first to forget all the love of God, and deny their better knowledge, before they could follow the Devil.

Questions. 1. How far does the first part of Genesis extend?—2. Into how many subdivisions is it divided?—3. How far does the first of these extend?—4. What does it treat of?—5. How far does the second extend?—6. Which stories does it comprise?—7. Where is the story of the fall of man found?—8. What is the claim of some regarding this story?—9. But how can you tell that Jesus and His disciples accepted it as real and trustworthy?—10. With whom did sin originate according to this account?—11. How can you answer, "in the Devil," if the name Devil is not mentioned in Gen. 3?—12. Who is the Devil?—13. Have we any accurate knowledge of the fall of the Devil and the origin of evil among angels?—14. Why is it important that sin was not originated by man but found its origin in the Devil?—15. Why was Adam's sin his own fault even though he was seduced and led astray by the Devil?—16. How did the Devil proceed in order to seduce Eve?—17. What did he do when this procedure failed?—18. What did he really succeed in awakening in the heart of Eve?—19. That she began to doubt God's love was the beginning of her sin, for doubt is the reverse of what?—20. What then is the root of all sin?—21. What was the good which Eve was to obtain by eating of the forbidden fruit according to the Devil's assertion?—22. But to what end did the eating really lead her?—23. What had the Devil thus done with Adam and Eve?—24. Where do the Bible and the catechism speak of such deception of the Devil

and sin?—25. What shows to us that the first sin was no "small and easy" matter?—26. How does the Devil proceed even to the present day to lead men astray?—27. What will we have to guard against especially for that reason?

4. **God's judgment and promise.** Read Gen. 3:14—24. Sin is followed by **punishment**. God must judge and punish sin for His own sake, for He is holy and can not tolerate sin (Ps. 5:4; Isaiah 6:3; Lev. 19:2); for He is faithful and must fulfill His threat (Gen. 2:17; Ex. 20:5; Deut. 27:26; Gal. 6:7, 8). He must also punish sin for man's sake, so that he might fear God, improve, and never again sin against God. Here God's judgment is first directed against the **Devil** and his instrument, the serpent; for he it was who tempted man to sin. It is much more severe for him than over his instrument. The judgment for his instrument is written verse 14. He had thought, "Now men have been enticed away from God and are forever brought under my power; now I am **their master** forever and ever, and they must obey me, their lord, like slaves. Where God formerly was the lord and king, I am now, and there is no deliverance from my power." But now he hears, "No; men will not follow you implicitly. They will be opposed to you and combat you, and finally one of the descendants of woman will arise, whom you will severely wound, but who will ultimately bruise your head, i. e., take your power over men from you."—Since **Eve** had permitted herself to be enticed before Adam (1 Tim. 2:14), her sentence also precedes that of Adam, and is more severe than his (Gen. 3:16). It is twofold: a) She shall experience motherhood as God had determined before (Gen. 1:28), but with much suffering; b) her husband shall be her master. If our day loves to put this twofold sentence out of the world, it simply revolts against divine judgment.—And God detracts nothing of **man's** office to cultivate the earth and rule over the other creatures, but he shall only do his work in the sweat of his brow. For through sin the earth has become a land filled with thorns and thistles. And at the end of his life, from this time forth, and for all his descendants there follows **death** (Gen. 3:17—19), as the wage of sin (Rom. 6:23; 5:12). Yes, in a spiritual sense death entered man's life immediately with sin, as God had said (Gen. 2:17), for men thereby fell from the communion with God, and sinned as something natural (Gen. 3:8—13), thus coming under the domain of the Devil. If they did not pray to God for forgiveness, and suffer themselves to be drawn into His communion, eternal death follows after physical death, i. e., the eternal banishment from the presence of God (Rev. 21:8). For he who will not cease to sin, must forever be cast from the presence of God, and be committed to eternal torment. The expulsion from paradise

into the world, which had now become a vale of sorrow, taught Adam and Eve something about the fundamental change which had entered their relation to God (Gen. 3:22-24).—How awful sin must be, if it calls forth such punishment from God; how we ought to guard ourselves against it!

But even in the midst of such judgment **grace** still rules, i. e., the loving disposition of God towards sinners. It was due to grace that God did not immediately commit men to eternal death, but granted them life and the opportunity to repent of their sin. It was grace that Eve did not lose her motherhood and Adam was not robbed of his dominion over the earth. It was grace that henceforth they must discharge their office under much pain and sorrow, for it taught them the more to supplicate the help of God and kept them from many sins. It was grace that they were expelled from paradise, for had they remained there, and had now eaten of the tree of life, their sin-stained and care-ridden lives would have become unending (verse 22). But the greatest grace of all is the promise of God, that the dominion of the Devil shall come to an end. Men shall struggle against him, and finally one of the descendants of woman shall arise and vanquish the Devil. Thereby God revealed His gracious will towards sinful man, and proclaimed the first **gospel** (= message of the grace of God for sinners). We know how this promise was fulfilled in the "Son of man," i. e., in Christ Jesus. Him did God, when the fulness of time was come, send from heaven into this world, born of woman, so that through Him we might be redeemed and again made children of God (Gal. 4:4). On the cross of Calvary's brow Gen. 3:15 was fulfilled. God did not send the Redeemer at once, but for a long time suffered men to struggle against sin and the Devil in their own strength, so that they might the better learn, how powerful sin and the Devil are, and that we can never vanquish them by our own reason or strength. They were fully to taste the misery of sin, so that they might the louder cry for deliverance.

Adam received the judgment and promise in true repentance and faith. He called his wife Eve (Heva), i. e., life giving (verse 20), and thereby implied that he trusted the word of divine promise. He believed the word of God, that his wife would bear a descendant in whom life should again gain the power over death.

- Questions.** 1. How far does the first part of Genesis extend?
—2. Into how many subdivisions is it divided?—3. How far does the first of these extend?—4. Of what does it treat?—5. How far does the second extend?—6. Which stories does it comprise?—7. Where is the story of the fall of man recorded?—8. What fol-

lowed upon the sin of man according to Gen 3:14—24?—9. Why was it necessary for God to punish sin even for His own sake?—10. And why was it necessary to punish sin for the sake of man also?—11. Why does God first pronounce judgment over the Devil, then over Eve, and finally over Adam?—12. What was the judgment over the serpent which the Devil used as his instrument?—13. How can you to the present day see how this judgment over the serpent was fulfilled?—14. What was the punishment over the Devil?—15. What did the Devil try to attain through his seduction of man?—16. And what was he forced to hear instead?—17. What was the punishment for Eve?—18. What then are all married women doing who try to circumvent the one and invalidate the other?—19. Why did God so ordain that the heavier penalty fell upon woman rather than upon man?—20. What was the punishment for man?—21. Which punishment fell upon both?—22. How did death then come into the world?—23. In which sense can you say that death followed upon the heels of sin?—24. What is spiritual death?—25. How did it become evident externally also that the first human beings had fallen from the grace of God?—26. But with what did God temper even His punishment?—27. What does Scripture understand under grace?—28. Enumerate the various points in which God's grace became manifest towards the first men?—29. What was the greatest evidence of this grace?—30. What is the word Gen. 3:15 called therefore?—31. What is the meaning of gospel?—32. Where did God completely fulfill this promise?—33. Why did not God send the Redeemer at once?—34. What must man's answer to God's grace be?—35. How did Adam show that he believed God's promise?

5. The terrible growth of sin among men. Read Gen. 4:1—16, 17—26; 6:1—8. Sin grew with terrifying rapidity, somewhat like a prairie fire or an avalanche, rushing down from the mountains into the valley below. Adam and Eve's sin was the venomous source, from which the poisoned waters poured forth, and rapidly developed into a terrible torrent. In Cain, already, it grew into fratricide, travelled through his entire family, and also poisoned the Sethites, so that God was finally forced to say of both lines of first mankind, "My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh," i. e., wholly permeated and ruled by sin (Gen. 6:3, 5). What Scripture says of original or inherited sin (Gen. 8:21; Ps. 51:5; John 3:5, 6) is here tangibly brought to light. And original sin, since it was not combatted (Gen. 4:7) entailed its fulness of terrible fruits (sins in thought, word, and deed) in a thousand variations.

Eve believed God's promise (Gen. 3:15) to be fulfilled in **Cain** (Gen. 4:1). But it seems that Cain's character soon showed her her error, and she named her second son **Abel** (= breath, vanity). As the two sons grew up, the profound difference between them became apparent (compare their offerings): both had inherited sin from their parents (John 3:6); but Abel subdued and ruled over it, whilst

Cain gave it free reign (Gen. 4:7). Thus in the first family the cleavage became apparent, which has been on earth ever since, and will be until the end of days, namely between pious and impious, righteous and unrighteous, believers and unbelievers, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world (Hebr. 11:4; 1 John 3:12; Jud. 11).

After Cain had slain his brother Abel, he emigrated from the section where his parents lived and where God had revealed Himself, going towards the east. He must have taken a daughter of Adam and Eve, i. e., one of his sisters, to wife. From him descended the Cainites. In those days God still approved of the marriage between brother and sister. It became a sin, however, as soon as men had begun to multiply, and it was no longer necessary for the propagation of the race.

With the **Cainites** sin drove to ever greater alienation from God: Lamech, the sixth after Adam, transgressed the divine order, that there shall be "**one** man and **one** woman," and added a second wife to the first (Gen. 4:19). Full of joy over the invention of the sword (Gen. 4:22) he laid down the principle of blood revenge, and sang the song of hate: "I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold" (Gen. 4:23, 24). Thus the history of the Cainites begins with a murder and ends with a song of hate. They began the roving life of the nomad, whereas at the beginning of history there was agriculture and animal husbandry (Gen. 4:2; compare Gen. 3:17—19). They invented music and work in iron and brass (Gen. 4:21, 22). But as to calling upon God and living the God willed life, nothing such is reported of this family. They became more and more estranged from God, more and more lost in the earthly, visible, sensual world, and every one sought selfish ends, the earmarks of the world to the present day.

The **Sethites**, i. e., the descendants of Seth, the son whom God had given Adam and Eve in place of the slain Abel, at first were different (Gen. 4:25). They began publicly to worship and to call upon the name of God, so that it might not be forgotten by others. Thus they took the first steps towards a regular public worship (Gen. 4:26). Enoch distinguished himself by his righteous life and was taken by God, without passing through death and the grave (Gen. 5:24). No doubt, God did this in order to remind men of the promise, Gen. 3:15, and to show them, that there remains a victory over death for the righteous (Hebr. 11:5, 6). Lamech, the tenth after Adam, waited for the promised Savior, and believed he had come in his son Noah (Gen. 5:29). Indeed, he erred, yet Noah became a

forerunner of the promised Savior, for the new race began with him, and he was permitted to see the symbol of peace between God and man in the sky (Gen. 9:12—17). Of course, ultimately the Sethites permitted themselves to be drawn into the same destruction by the Cainites (Gen. 6:2); yet Noah, who maintained his piety and became the progenitor of the new race, was a Sethite.

The **genealogical tables** (Gen. 5:1—32) merely mention the tribal chiefs, so that we have no indication here, how numerous men had become prior to the deluge. But we must not think of them as being only a few and insignificant. Seth's family up to the flood numbered 10 generations. The length of their lives was very great. This fact must be attributed in part to natural causes: the original creative power was still evident; the power of death only gradually permeated the race; life was simple, etc. And in part this was directly brought about by God, the earth was rapidly to be peopled, and the knowledge of creation, of paradise, and the fall of man was to be preserved with certainty. Thus Adam for 56 years lived together with Lamech, the father of Noah, and could tell him everything that had occurred at the beginning. But however long their life's duration may have been, ultimately it was said of each one, "and he died" (Gen. 5:5, 8, 11, etc.), an unmistakable evidence of the fact that men were now under the dominion of death.

Questions. 1. How far does the first chief part of Genesis extend?—2. Where is the creation of heaven and earth recorded?—3. Where is the story of Paradise told?—4. Where do we read the story of the fall of man?—5. What is told us Gen. 3:14—24?—6. How far does the fifth subdivision of the first chief part of Genesis extend?—7. What are we told in this subdivision?—8. Mention the grades in the development of sin among men.—9. What was God constrained to say of men at the end of this development?—10. With what, for instance, can this awful growth of sin be compared?—11. Which teaching of Scripture is tangibly and palpably put before us by this development of sin?—12. Mention several passages which treat of original sin.—13. Why is it called original sin?—14. What are the two parts of original sin?—15. What is the relation of original sin to sins in thought, word, and deed?—16. Who was also tainted with sin at birth?—17. Why did Eve name her second son Abel?—18. How do you explain the fact that there was this great difference between Cain and Abel if both were alike conceived and born in sin?—19. What then can not excuse you if sin grows ever greater and greater in your life?—20. Which word of God spoken to Cain must you therefore especially remember?—21. Of what is the contrast between Cain and Abel in the home of the first parents a prophecy?—22. Cain slew his brother Abel; when are you also a murderer in the eyes of God?—23. What was the punishment of Cain for his fratricide?—24. What is to be said of the fact that Cain married his own

sister?—25. In which of the Cainites did sin reach a special height?—26. At which occasion did Lamech compose the first song of which the Bible tells?—27. In what field did the Cainites show their especial inventive power?—28. Where did God Himself commission men for the first work of culture?—29. But where did all culture, which separated itself from God and sank into earthly and carnal things, lead?—30. What can you say about the Sethites?—31. Why did God take Enoch from this earth without the agencies of death and the grave?—32. Why can we say that the promise given in Paradise was not forgotten by the Sethites?—33. In which respects was Noah a fulfillment of the hopes of his father Lamech and in which respects not?—34. What finally happened to the Sethites also?—35. Why is it impossible to learn from the genealogy in Gen. 5:1—32 how numerous the human race was prior to the deluge?—36. How do you explain the great age of men which the genealogy records?—37. What is the purpose of the constantly repeated "and he died" in the same genealogy?

6. The deluge, through which God destroyed sin-stained men. Read Gen. 6:11—22; 7:1—24; 8:1—14. When the wickedness of men had grown great on earth it **repented** the Lord that He had made men (Gen. 6:6). That does not mean that God looked upon His work as wrong, or a failure, or, perhaps, even sinful, but that He was grieved, since men would not permit the great and good thoughts which He had had at the creation of Adam to be realized, but rather changed the good into the evil. God is not indifferent to the doings of men, but their obedience pleases Him and their disobedience grieves Him. He is sorry to punish and destroy them for their sins, but His **holiness** and **righteousness** demands it!

Indeed, in His **patience** and **longsuffering** He gives to men an opportunity for repentance (Gen. 6:3), for God hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way and live (Ezekiel 33, 11; 2 Peter 3:9). But He would not be God, if He would not punish the sinner who abides in his sin (compare Matth. 24:37—39). But because He had promised, that from the descendants of Adam and Eve the Savior must come (Gen. 3:15), He would not destroy pious Noah with the rest, but preserve his life and make him the ancestor of a new race.

The divine command to build an **ark** was a great test for Noah's faith. It would not have been strange if Noah had thought, the earth and men have now existed for so long a time, they will still continue, especially since it is not unlikely that the people about maintained and claimed this often enough. But he stood the test. His faith trusted in God, and believed that God could, indeed, and would destroy men because of their sins. Therefore in word and deed he preached to his contemporaries, and exhorted them to turn

from their wicked ways (2 Peter 2:5). His faith also trusted God, that He could and would rescue him and his family in the ark (Hebr. 11:7). And this faith alone saved him. His faith was his answer to the divine promise of **grace**.—Men have sometimes ridiculed the size of the ark (about 500 feet in length, 100 in width, and 45 in height), but they forget that the antique world loved gigantic buildings, and that these were also fitting to the physical size and strength of men in those days. We could not build the pyramids today, which the Egyptians built 4,000 years ago. And if it is claimed that these dimensions are very disproportionate, men overlook, that a ship was once built according to the proportions as here given, and carried a cargo one-third greater than ordinary ships. Since the ark was to carry the animals and all their necessary feed, it must needs have been very large, and indeed its size sufficed.

The **flood** or **deluge**, which now came as soon as God had closed the door behind Noah, i. e., safeguarded him and his family, so that no harm could befall them, still lives in the myths and traditions of many peoples. The Japanese and Chinese tell about it as well as the Indians and Greenlanders. Usually it is a ship that saved men, and a mountain, on which it alighted. Even the birds are mentioned. Nature also bears witness to the story of the flood. In the Himalaya Mountains in India animals have been found that only live on the plains, and many of them have even been found in a crevice. The same is true of the Cordilleras in South America. Elephants were found frozen in the ice of Siberia, shells and fish on the tops of high mountains. The rushing waters ploughed up the earth, toppled over the mountains, and buried whole forests.—But only the account of the Bible gives us an idea of its immensity. As a witness it has even preserved the date when it began: the 17th day of the 2nd month (November, perhaps) of the year 1656 since the creation of the world (Gen. 7:11). It was a great act of divine judgment for the entire human race, and therefore can only be compared with the judgment at the last day, which will also extend over all men (2 Peter 3:5—7). But the deluge was also an **act of salvation**. For God preserved Noah and his family in the ark in order that a new race might take rise. Thus it is a prototype of the waters of baptism, through which the sinner is rescued into a new life, the life in the childship with God (1 Peter 3:20, 21). The ark, however, in which Noah and his family were preserved, is the prototype of the Church as the little group of them that are saved in Jesus Christ. Whoever through baptism has become a member of this congregation of disciples of Jesus Christ and continues there

to the end, will safely be brought by **Him** through all the storms of this life to the new heaven and the new earth wherein righteousness dwelleth (2 Peter 3:13).

Not only was it a deed of faith, that Noah entered the ark, but also that when all the living beings outside of the ark perished, he still clung to his God and trusted Him that he would not be forgotten. And it was faith which kept him in the ark, until God Himself opened the door, and commanded him to leave the ark (Gen. 8:15, 16). He put all things into the hand of God's faithfulness, and not in vain.

Questions. 1. Into how many chief parts is the Book of Genesis divided?—2. Of what do the first five subdivisions treat?—3. How far does the sixth subdivision extend?—4. Of what does it treat?—5. What was the final judgment which God passed upon men?—6. Only who had remained godly and pious?—7. What passed through the heart of God when the whole earth was thus filled with sin?—8. What is not the meaning of the expression, "and it repented the Lord"?—9. What does it mean?—10. Why was God constrained to punish men though He was loath to do so?—11. What did God show by giving to men a time of grace of 120 years?—12. Why would and could God not destroy all men?—13. Did He owe it to men to save even one?—14. To whom did He owe it?—15. Why to Himself?—16. Which of the divine attributes in addition to His holiness and justice, His patience and long-suffering do we clearly see from this chapter?—17. What did the command to build the ark involve for Noah?—18. Why was it a test of his faith?—19. Where did we first see that faith is the true answer to God's promises?—20. What do they forget who ridicule the size of the ark?—21. How was it tested at one time to show that the dimensions of the ark are not unwieldy?—22. Why was it necessary to build the ark so large?—23. What serves to substantiate the biblical account of the flood?—24. How is it proven by nature also?—25. But where do we find the most detailed and accurate account of the flood?—26. What was the twofold meaning of the flood according to the Scriptures?—27. What does it show as an act of justice?—28. Of what was it the prototype in as far as it was an act of salvation?—29. In which respects is the ark a prototype of the Church?—30. How did Noah show his faith after he had entered the ark and everything outside perished?—31. How did he show his faith when the waters continued for so long a time upon the earth?—32. On what did his faith trust?

7. The story of Noah's family to the confusion of tongues (Gen. 8:15—11:32).—Read Genesis 8:15—22; 9:1—17. 18—22; 11:1—9.

The first thing which Noah did when he found himself and his family saved was to build an altar unto the Lord and offer a burnt offering. This pleased God well, and He answered Noah by establishing a covenant with him (Gen. 9:9). This covenant consisted of the promise not again to punish and destroy mankind with the waters

of a flood (Gen. 9:11). The firm laws and regulations which God had put into the world at creation (laws of nature) should never again be set aside as had in part been done at the deluge. The regular succession of seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease as long as the earth endures (Gen. 8:22). It was God's grace which thus condescended to men and resolved to bear them, whose imaginations are evil from youth, in much long-suffering (Gen. 8:21). The period of divine forbearance which delayed judgment and refrained from punishing sin with rigor now began (Rom. 3:25, 26). And as a **token of the covenant** between God and men God put the rainbow in the clouds. Whether this was the first time the rainbow was seen or whether it existed already before the flood can not now be determined with any degree of certainty, because our knowledge of conditions in nature prior to the flood is too indefinite. If it did exist prior to this time, at least it was no token of God's grace toward men. This meaning as a sign of the covenant of peace between God and men it now received. As the rainbow always appears in the clouds when the sun shines again after a storm, thus it would remind us that we with our sins, indeed, deserve God's punishment, but God is patient with us and will not yet destroy us. And as the rainbow always seems to reach from heaven to earth, thus now in truth there should be a covenant of peace between God in heaven and men on earth.—God has kept His promise to the present day. For even though in individual countries and as a punishment for the sins of the people God has withheld rain and sunshine and sent crop failures and famines, yet He did not abrogate the laws of nature, and while a crop failure prevailed in one country, another enjoyed abundant crops, so that mankind after all was preserved. Each long enduring drouth or continued rainfall should remind us of the fact that God is Lord over all, and that even the laws of nature are only instruments in His mighty hand. And He would also train us to true confidence and trust in Him.—The ultimate reason why God preserved Noah during the flood and now established this covenant with him was the gracious promise which He had given Adam in Paradise (Gen. 3:15). Because the Savior was to come from the descendants of Adam and Eve God kept Noah alive so that he might be the ancestor of the Savior. And because God would some day, namely on the cross on Golgatha's brow, most fearfully punish the sins of the whole world on Christ, the vicar and substitute of men, He would now practice forbearance and delay judgment (Rom. 3:26).

Because after the deluge all men would descend from Noah, as before they had descended from Adam, God now also renewed the

blessing over Noah, which before, at creation, He had spoken for Adam and Eve (Gen. 1:28 and Gen. 9:1). Yet with all the similarity there is still a difference. Beasts for instance will now no longer gladly and willingly obey man, but must be forced to obedience (Gen. 9:2). At the same time God established certain **fundamental principles** decisive for all men (Gen. 9:3—6): they shall have authority over the lives of animals and kill them in order to eat their flesh, but the lives of their fellowmen shall be sacred. Perhaps they were permitted to eat the flesh of animals, because for them that were born after the flood the former vigor and strength was lost. Men no longer attained to the great age as before. Only bloody and therefore, as it were, still living flesh was prohibited, so that they themselves might not become brutish and sink into savagery. They dare not take the life of fellowmen, for to do so means a violation of the image of God, for even fallen man still retains something of the divine image (Gen. 1:26). And whoever takes man's life notwithstanding this prohibition, shall be punished by forfeiting his own (Gen. 9:6). God thus established capital punishment, which the Apostle Paul later emphatically declares the right of civil government (Rom. 13:1—4). Our own time will do well, if it refrains from weakening these fundamental principles.

Questions. 1. Into how many subdivisions is the first chief part of the Book of Genesis divided?—2. Where is the account of the fall of man found?—3. Where do we find the account of the flood?—4. How far does the seventh subdivision extend?—5. What does it tell us?—6. How did Noah show his gratitude to God for the gracious preservation?—7. How did God answer his thankoffering?—8. Wherein did this covenant consist?—9. To what is it due to the present day that nature follows its course with such regularity?—10. What does it also show when God preserves the earth and its laws in spite of sin?—11. What was to be the external sign of the covenant of God with man?—12. When does a rainbow come to be to the present day?—13. Of what does it consist?—14. If this is the case with the rainbow what is one tempted to assume about the age of the rainbow?—15. But what is the new thing about the rainbow if it existed before Noah's day?—16. How is the rainbow a splendid symbol of the covenant of peace between God and man?—17. In which respects does God still fulfill His promise, though He sometimes sends crop failures and famines?—18. Of what would God remind us by such visitations?—19. From which error concerning natural laws would God preserve us thereby?—20. What was the final reason why God preserved Noah during the flood and made the covenant with

him?—21. Why could God begin the time of long-suffering and patience in which He no longer cursed the earth nor destroyed men on account of their sin with the flood?—22. What is the difference between the blessing which God gave to Adam and after the deluge to Noah?—23. What can you tell of the fundamental principles of right which God then gave to men?—24. Why is the eating of meats emphatically permitted at the present time?—25. How is Gen. 9:4 to be understood?—26. How are people called who demand abstinence of all consumption of meats?—27. Why is the slaying of man so heinous a sin, if the slaying of animals is permitted?—28. What is the penalty for murder according to Gen. 9:26?—29. Where did Paul expressly concede to the government the right of capital punishment?—30. What is to be said of all the endeavor to abolish capital punishment?

Sin also continued to grow during the time after the flood. What God had said, "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," was true also of Noah and his children and their descendants (Gen. 8:21). Ham especially, the youngest of Noah's three sons, gave it full rein, so that it manifested itself in all its disgraceful brazenness. For this reason Ham with all his descendants was accursed by his enraged father, while Noah blessed Shem and Japheth. With Shem's descendants, Noah prophesied, God will commune and give to them blessing and salvation. The Savior of men promised Gen. 3:15, shall come from their midst. And Japheth, too, shall have free access to the descendants of Shem and thus also to the blessings, which Shem's descendants shall enjoy. The youngest son of Ham (Canaan) on the other hand with all his descendants shall serve the descendants of Shem and Japheth. The attitude of the ancestor shall be determining for all his descendants: In Shem and Japheth all their descendants are blessed, in Ham or Canaan their descendants cursed. Thus Adam's sin brought perdition to the whole human race (Rom. 5:12). The ancestor is the root, his descendants the tree; and as the root is, the tree is. Not only the sin, but also the curse descends from father to son (Eph. 2:3).—As Noah had predicted, it came to be. All men after the flood descended from **Shem, Ham, and Japheth**. The descendants of Shem included Abraham and the people of Israel. God chose Israel from among the nations of the world, and made them His people (Ex. 19:5, 6). And from them the Savior came. The descendants of Japheth scattered over the whole earth and became masters of the world. The nations of Europe especially and their descendants, scattered as they are over the whole universe, belong to the descendants of Japheth. Through the people of Israel—and the apostles were Jews—the glad tidings of the Savior and thus of salvation came to them. The descendants of Ham, however, who spread especially over Africa, came into the most dis-

trussing slavery. At first they were the slaves of Shem's descendants, especially the Arabians, and in modern times they came more and more under the dominion of the Japhethites. Therefore be not deceived; God is not mocked! Not until now and through the work of missions do the Hamites hear of the Savior of the world who was born a descendant of Shem and in whom the Japhethites have already rejoiced for so long a time. Thus Noah, illuminated by the Spirit of God, predicted the basic lines of universal history.

The ark had landed on Mt. Ararat in the Armenian Plateau. And from here after the flood men spread over all the lands (Gen. 10:32). Genesis 10 enumerates many of the people who sprang from Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. For this reason the chapter is called the **table of nations**. It is not the purpose of this table of nations to mention all peoples who came from Shem, Ham, and Japheth up to the time of Moses, for there were many among them who never came in contact with the children of Israel. Or there were great nations before his day, like the Rephaims, with whom the Emims, the Zuzims, the Avims may have been related (Gen. 14:5; Deut. 2:10, 20—23; 3:11; Joshua 17:5; 2 Sam. 21:16—22), well known to Moses but not mentioned by him because in his day they were already extinct or on the point of dying out. Infidelity has found much occasion for ridicule in this table of nations. Still the more the excavation of the ancient cities and memorials of this section progresses, the more the biblical statements are shown to be correct. — Moses added his table of nations in his book at this place to show that all peoples of the earth are branches of the same trunk, however divers they may have become in the dispersion. Now where God is about to permit the nations to follow their own paths, in order to choose Abraham and his descendants, the people of Israel, as His own and prepare them for the coming redemption, this table of nations is to assert the truth, that even though God now sees fit at this time to reveal Himself only to **one** man and **one** people, yet the other peoples are not forgotten by Him. And regarding the heathen peoples this table of nations was to be like a prophecy, which said, You, too, still have a future. But for Israel it was to be a constant admonition, Do not forget, that there are many other peoples besides yourself, many of whom are much greater and stronger than you. And if notwithstanding this fact God has chosen you as His special people, it is only His free and undeserved grace (Deut. 7:7, 8; 9:5, 6; 10:14, 15; 32:6; Isa. 43:22; Ezek. 16:3). Ashkenaz (Gen. 10:3) among the descendants of Japheth is looked upon as the progenitor of the Germanic peoples.



Questions. 1. At the beginning of the history of man is found the account of the fall of man in Paradise; whose heinous sin is told us at the beginning of the history of the post-diluvian man?—2. How was Ham punished for his sin?—3. Of what did the curse over him consist?—4. What blessing stands over against this curse?—5. Of what should the happiness of Shem consist?—6. The happiness of Japheth?—7. What principle must guide God if the curse and the blessing are not only valid for Shem, Ham, and Japheth but also for their descendants?—8. Where did we first meet this law?—9. Where do Jesus and Paul express this same fact?—11. Show how the blessing was fulfilled for Shem?—12. For Japheth?—13. Show how Ham and his descendants were struck by the curse?—14. Who is descended from Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and thus from Noah?—15. How must the race after the flood be regarded?—16. From where did this uniform race spread over the earth?—17. Which chapter of the Bible expresses the fact that all nations after the flood were a unit?—18. Study the table of nations and compare it with the chart.—19. Show in a general way where the descendants of Noah's three sons lived at the time of Moses.—20. What was not Moses' intention when he wrote the table of nations?—21. What shows this quite clearly?—22. Why did Moses add the table of nations at this particular place in his book?—23. How is this also a promise for the heathen world?—24. How for Israel?—25. Of whom are the occidental peoples descendants?—26. To which of the descendants of Japheth is the origin of the Germanic peoples traced?

Genesis 11:1—9 describes in detail how the human family came to be divided into many peoples (Gen. 11:1). Noah's descendants following the course of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers had migrated from the Armenian highland, and, proceeding in a southeasterly direction, had finally settled in the land of Shinar (Gen. 11:2), i. e., in the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris, later called Chaldea (Gen. 11:31). Here Nimrod succeeded in gaining the ascendancy over others and founded the first empire. Men now no longer inquired after the power and will of God, but in everything they depended on their own power and might. For in spite of the curse over Ham sin had also grown in the new generation and had begun to flourish. Since Nimrod was a descendant of Ham, it seemed as though Noah had erred, when he said that the Hamites should not rule over the others, but should serve them. Thus even to the present day the wicked often attain to power and honor among men. Conditions ultimately change, however, oftentimes in the twinkling of an eye, and the truth of God's Word prevails.

Thus here too. Indeed sin grew rapidly at first. Contrary to the express command of God, that they should replenish the earth (Gen. 9:1), men determined to remain together, to insure greater

power for themselves. Instead of hallowing the Name of God they determined to make a "name" for themselves. The building of the colossal tower of Babel was to accomplish this purpose. But while they were in the midst of realizing their wicked design God interfered and "hindered their evil counsel and purpose." He confounded their language, so that they could no longer understand each other's speech. This not only forced them to cease in their endeavors, but also scattered them into all lands. Only the few families that still understood each other could journey together out into the world, for language unites just as it separates men. The tower was never completed, and because of the confusion of tongues was called Babel, which means confusion. Today there are over a thousand different languages in the world. Here they took their rise, and since then they have multiplied. The confusion of tongues was a divine judgment over men's arrogance, but at the same time also a manifestation of grace, by means of which God would train men. For, since now they could no longer understand each other, they also could no longer so easily seduce each other. Sin, indeed, was not abolished, but its rapid development was checked. To the present day there are ruins of burned bricks in the vicinity of Babel. When these ruins were investigated, the words of Nebuchadnezzar were found, "I have restored the memorial of the ancient times, which a king of remote antiquity constructed. From the days of the flood they did desert him, when they fell into a confusion of their tongues" (compare Dan. 4:30). So here, too, stones must cry out and ratify the truth of God's Word.—Only One there is, who can unite the separate and often hostile races, and that is the Holy Spirit. As an evidence of this the apostles on Pentecost, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke not in one, but in many tongues. And by means of the gospel, carried to all people through the great work of missions, He will eternally unite all believers into one flock under Christ, the Lord and Shepherd (John 10:16).

Questions. 1. Where does the Bible tell us how a separation of the race came to pass?—2. To which land did the descendants of Noah first turn when they left Mt. Ararat in the Armenian Plateau?—3. Who here founded the first empire?—4. What was Nimrod forced to do in order to found an empire?—5. On what do all empires depend in their final analysis?—6. What was to be the sole authority in Nimrod's empire?—7. To whose kingdom did Nimrod's empire therefore stand in contrast?—8. Nimrod was a descendant of Ham; what thought might this fact incite?—9. But which fundamental law of divine government was here only to be emphasized?—10. When did it become clear that God is the strongest after all and is able to fulfill His word for the descendants of Ham?—11. What did men attempt to build?—12. In which respect was this a rebellion against God and His will?—

13. How did God hinder the evil counsel and purpose of men?—14. To what did God force men by the confusion of tongues?—15. What is it due to, therefore, that there are so many tongues on earth?—16. In which way was the confusion of tongues a judgment of God?—17. In which way was it at the same time also an act of preserving grace?—18. Separated from each other men soon became enemies. Each tribe and people sought only its own advantages. The result was war, where one people combats the other. Who only can in truth unite the separated peoples?—19. When did the Holy Ghost begin to do this?—20. What external fact at Pentecost shows that the Spirit would put away the difference between peoples and again unite them?—21. By what means only will the Spirit bring about an inner union between men?—22. Where did Jesus say that He would bring such a unity?—23. Will all peoples and all men belong to it?—24. Who only will belong to it?—25. What is to be said, when men dream of a time here on earth where there will be no more war and all peoples and nations be one?

Men, indeed, did not understand grace, which even in the midst of judgment, only seeks their welfare. They took with them out into the dispersion a great treasure of sacred reminiscences of God and His deeds, above all things the knowledge of creation of the garden of Eden, the fall of man, the casting out from paradise, the flood, and the saving of Noah. But since they did not thank the living God, who preserved the world for their sake, and ever gave them rain and sunshine in season (Rom. 1:21), for His goodness and mercy, they also more and more forgot that He alone is the almighty and the holy God. They more and more placed sun, moon, and stars, and water, and the other creatures, which are only the means through which God blesses us, on the same level with God, and adored them as gods. Thus they fell into polytheism and became heathen. And as soon as for them God became a mere god among other gods, their foolish heart was darkened (Rom. 1:21), until finally they lost sight entirely of God's inner nature, and He became for them an unknown God (Acts 17:23). They still knew that they were dependent upon a higher being, and thus invoked Him (compare the "Great Spirit" of the Indian) and feared Him, and made sacrifices to insure His good will, but that He is the only God in heaven and earth, the Creator and Preserver of the universe, and above all things, that He is love and has a father's compassion, they no longer knew. The Hamites especially fell into grossest idolatry and darkest night. But even if the Shemites and Japhethites on the whole did preserve a loftier conception of God, they, too, were heathen who did not know God in truth. Men like Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18), in a measure also Jethro (Ex. 18:19) and Balaam (Numbers 22), especially Abraham, only go to show, that it was men's own fault, if they lost the true conception

of God. Since men in the dispersion more and more forgot God, their reminiscences of creation and remote antiquity in general became more and more beclouded and mixed up with much that is erroneous and only legendary. If Moses had not written the first eleven chapters of his book under the special illumination of the Holy Spirit, we would know nothing definite about the beginnings of the world and its earliest history. These eleven chapters are the basis for everything which Holy Scripture now tells us, and for all subsequent history of men.—Where God is forgotten men fall deeper and deeper into vice and sin. Rom. 1:22—32 St. Paul outlines the life in sin so obvious in the heathen peoples after the deluge, and which we meet to the present day with all men who do not conduct themselves according to the faith in the living God. Corruption did not develop in the same measure with all people, but everywhere true fear of God and true faith were entirely lacking. And in all men there existed the lustings and inclination to things evil (Gen. 8:21; Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13; Rom. 8:7).

Thus the history of the descendants of Noah like that of the descendants of Adam ended in the night of darkness of sin. Will God permit mankind to perish in sin as they deserve? Will He permit them ever to pursue their own way, or will He reveal Himself to them in grace? He already answered the question (Gen. 3:15) and promised Him, who will redeem men from the power of the Devil, the dominion of death, and the servitude of sin. But since He did give this promise, and is faithful and true, and always does as He says, He chose the descendants of Shem, and from their midst Abraham, to reveal Himself to him, train him to be the father of the faithful, and make him a people from whose ranks the Redeemer should come. For this reason chapter 11:10—32 tells us the origin of Abraham and describes his descent from Shem. Thus divine grace, which does not rejoice in the death of the wicked, but rather he should return from his ways and live (Ezek. 18:23), rises supreme over human sin. And the thought of this unmerited fidelity and grace of God bids us look hopefully into the second part of the First Book of Moses.

Questions:—1. Where in the Bible do you read how the human family came to be divided into many peoples?—2. What was God's two-fold purpose in dividing the people?—3. Why was it that God's gracious purpose was frustrated?—4. Mention the great treasure of sacred reminiscences that men took with them into the dispersion!—5. Why was it that they fell into polytheism and became heathen nevertheless?—6. What con-

ception of God only remained to them?—7. Whereunto did this knowledge impel them?—8. In what way did God nevertheless become an unknown God for them?—9. Which one of Noah's descendants fell deepest into night and darkness?—10. What characters among the Japhethites and Shemites established that it was men's own fault if in the end they lost all knowledge of God?—11. In what way do these characters show it?—12. To whom are we indebted, despite this approaching night and darkness, for a reliable knowledge of events before the dispersion of the nations?—13. Where does Paul describe the moral blindness that rapidly increased among heathen nations?—14. Corruption, indeed, was not equally rooted in the various nations; what scripture passages, however, describe the condition that was alike among them all?—15. When you consider that the story of Noah's descendants ended in such corruption, what question arises on your lips?—16. In what passage had God already obligated Himself and promised mankind relief?—17. Among which of Noah's descendants had God preserved a closer communion with Himself, that the Redeemer might come from their midst?—18. What is therefore the reason that the last section (vv. 10—32) is incorporated in the eleventh chapter?—19. To whom do we owe it that the first part of Genesis does not end without a ray of hope?—20. What principle of Divine providence in the government of the world is here clearly revealed?—21. At the same time, it is just as clearly shown, that salvation can in no wise come from whom?

The 12th chapter marks the beginning of the SECOND PART of the First Book of Moses (Genesis). It extends to the 50th chapter and relates the story of the patriarchs of the People of Is'raël to Jō'seph's death.

The first part of the book recorded the history of the entire human race, the second part, however, treats of the history of the ancestors of a single people. Thus the originally wide circle narrows down to a single people. God now permits all other peoples to follow their own course (Acts 14: 16), and only reveals Himself to them in nature (Rom. 1: 20), the peculiar course of history (Acts 17: 26—28), and the voice of conscience (Rom. 2: 14, 15). This is known as **natural** revelation. But to the narrower circle of **one** family, **one** tribe, **one** people God reveals Himself in a **supernatural** way, preparing them in the course of centuries to become the bearer of revelation for all nations, the great missionary for

the entire human race (Gen. 12:3; Exodus 19:5, 6; Isaiah 2:3; 42:6; 49:3; 60:3—5; John 4:22). Here He reveals Himself in **word** and **deed**, so that He might be truly known as the living God, who interferes in the history of men, and rules and governs it, the God of salvation, who brings about the promised redemption (Gen. 3:15) for *Is'ra'el* and all men.

Revelation, as the name implies (revelation, derived from reveal (from *re*=back and *vellum*=veil), that is, to turn back or lift up the veil, to uncover and disclose the unknown and unseen) we call that manifestation of God whereby He discloses Himself to man and permits him to perceive and understand a part of His hidden being. **Natural Revelation** we call that revelation of God which is manifest in the creation and preservation of the world. This revelation is evident in the works of **nature**. When man contemplates the works of nature by which he is surrounded since the days of creation, when he perceives the perfect order that prevails in them, they reflect a ray of God's wisdom and he is forced to admit, Back of it all there must be a great Mind, a higher Being, filled with wisdom, that has established everything so artistically and harmoniously. Or, when he perceives that from year to year all life in nature withers and dies only to be resurrected in the following springtime he recognizes a ray of God's eternal power, and is obliged to say, Back of it all there must be a most powerful Being, which can ever and anon renew the spark of life (Rom. 1:20). Again, this revelation is evident in the **conscience** of man, which is implanted in him by the Creator. It is a mirror in which man can learn, as the case may be, What is the will of God, what ought to be, and what really is man's attitude toward God's will. Since the voice of conscience pronounces with such authority that man must acknowledge it and, in case he despises it, plunges him into a state of inner restlessness, he is forced to confess, This is not the voice of man, but rather the voice of a higher moral Being, who in this way would make His presence known to man, plead with him, urge him to do good and restrain him from doing evil (Rom. 2:15). Finally it is evident in the **history** of the nations; for when our close observation of them discloses, how one nation is punished by another, how whole nations decline and fall because of their unrighteousness, while righteous nations prosper, we are nearly compelled to conclude, Back of

it all a personal Power must be in operation, which orders and governs all things (Acts 17:16—28; Prov. 14:34). But despite this threefold natural revelation the heathen did not really know God (1 Cor. 1:21). Though they took the knowledge of the true God into the dispersion with them, they did not give thanks for His gifts (Rom. 1:21) and therefore their hearts were darkened so that they attached themselves not to God but only to God's gifts and goods and fell into polytheism and pantheism, or to the visible, tangible and material things in general and fell into materialism.*

By **supernatural revelation** of God we understand that special intervention of God into the course of the natural, and through sin perverted, development of mankind; when God makes Himself known by word and deed, to redeem the sinner from his sins and lead him back into His communion. This revelation began when Gen. 3:15 was spoken; and since the other nations were now left to their own course with only natural revelation to guide them, it was to continue in the life of Abraham and the people who descended from him, and finally to reach its climax in the incarnation, the life and sufferings, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was in the appearance of Christ that God had completely lifted the veil and had shown to man His innermost being and nature. He that saw Him, saw the Father (John 14:9). This revelation of God is reliably and infallibly registered in Holy Scriptures just as the fine apparatus of the photographer's camera focuses whatever appears before it; and in this way we have it to this day. Whoever, therefore, would know how God has revealed Himself and what is the nature and will of God, let him turn to the Holy Scriptures.

It is pure **grace** on the part of God that He thus condescended to the People of *Is'ra'el*, chose them from among the nations of the earth, and made them the recipients and

* **Polytheism** is that religious belief according to which there are many gods to worship. All things from which great powers proceed, whether of a salutary or a horrifying nature, such as the sun, the moon, fire, etc., are esteemed as gods. **Pantheism** we call that belief when people have lost sight of the difference between God and the world, when God and the world are identified; this they express by saying, The universe is God. **Materialism** denies that any thing exists outside of matter, even God and the spirit. Though men speak of the spirit or soul of man, what is so called, they say, is really not different from matter, and hence the spirit or soul of man ceases to be as soon as matter disintegrates or crumbles, in other words, when man dies. According to them there is no immortality of the soul.

the bearers of His revelation. And on the part of men the true answer to God's grace is **faith** which apprehends and clings to the merciful God and His word of promise. Thus the entire history of the patriarchs is shot through with divine grace and human faith (compare especially Gen. 15:6), and receives a New Testament character, for the New Testament also puts all things on the basis of grace and faith (Eph. 2:8, 9; Rom. 3:28; Gal. 3:6—9).

The **mode** in which God condescended to reveal Himself to men during the times of the patriarchs consisted in this, that He appeared in a vision (either before the inner eye in dreams, compare Gen. 15:12 and the following; 20:6; 28:12, or before the outer eye while perfectly conscious, Gen. 18:1 and the following), or in the form of an angel (angel of the Lord), Gen. 16:10; 22:11.

The second part of the First Book of Moses is again divided into three sections, of which the first, 12:1—25:11, relates the story of **Ā'brā hām**, the second, 25:19—26:35, the story of **Ī'sāac**, the third, 27:1—50:26, the story of **Jā'cob** and **Jō'seph**.

Questions:—1. Into how many parts is the first Book of Moses divided?—2. How far does the first part extend?—3. How far the second?—4. What does the second part narrate?—5. What significant difference between the two parts appears when we compare them?—6. What revelations did even those nations have that God permitted to follow their own course?—7. What is understood by revelation?—8. What is natural revelation?—9. How many forms of natural revelation are there?—10. In what way does God reveal Himself through the works of nature that surround man since the days of creation?—11. Where does the apostle Paul speak of this revelation?—12. In what way does God reveal Himself through conscience?—13. Where does Paul speak of this revelation?—14. How does God reveal Himself through history?—15. What Scripture passage so intimates?—16. Did the heathen really learn to know God through natural revelation?—17. Why not?—18. Into what form of religion did they fall as a punishment for their ingratitude?—19. Was natural revelation to remain the only one whereby God would make Himself known?—20. What would man never have attained in that case?—21. What other revelation did God intend to vouchsafe?—22. What do we understand by supernatural revelation?

—23. By what means is supernatural revelation realized?—24. What does it constantly aim at?—25. Where did supernatural revelation begin?—26. Where did it reach its climax?—27. Why did it reach its climax in Christ's incarnation, suffering, death and resurrection?—28. Where is supernatural revelation recorded in such a way that today we can see and hear it as though we lived at the time of its happening?—29. In what narrow circle did God reveal Himself in a supernatural way?—30. From what passages do we learn that the people descending from Abraham were not to keep the revelation of salvation to themselves, but were to spread it among all nations?—31. When we contemplate the revelation given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, what do we observe on the part of God?—32. In what way do we observe pure grace on the part of God?—33. What do the Scriptures understand by grace? (Page 50).—34. And what do we observe on the part of man, that is, on the part of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?—35. What do the Scriptures understand by faith?—36. What later period, which also puts everything on the basis of grace and faith, is pre-figured by the story of the patriarchs?—37. What can you tell me about the mode in which God revealed Himself to the patriarchs?—38. Into how many sections is the second part of Genesis divided?—39. Where are the stories of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob and of Joseph recorded?

1. **The life of Abraham from his migration from Haran to the solemn declaration of his righteousness (Gen. 12: 1—15: 21).**—Read Gen. 12: 1—9; 13: 1—18; 14: 1—24; 15: 1—6; 15: 7—21.

The branch of the Shemites from which Abraham descended (Gen. 11: 10—26) had followed the course of the Euphrates river south and had finally located at **Ur** of the Chaldees, about halfway between Babel and the Persian Gulf (Gen. 11: 28). Here Abraham and his brothers, Nahor and Haran, were born as sons of the wealthy nomadic prince Terah, about 2000 B. C., and 400 years after the flood. After Haran's death (Gen. 11: 28) the whole family with its large train of servants, both male and female, scarcely less than 4,000 souls, and all its vast flocks, migrated to northern Mesopotamia. They called this new location **Haran**, perhaps as a memorial to the deceased brother of Abraham who bore the same name (Gen. 11: 31).

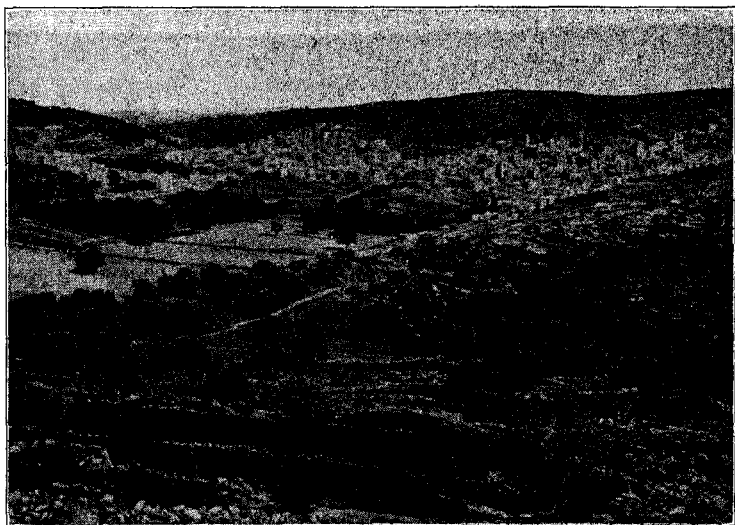
Terah's family still knew the true God, but at the same time also worshiped other gods (Jos. 24: 2). But since God in His grace had promised to redeem men (Gen. 3: 15) and the redeemer was to descend from Shem (Gen. 9: 26), He could not permit all the Shemites to lapse into heathendom. He is a faithful God who fulfills His word and carries out His promises. For this reason He selected **Abraham** to reveal Himself to him and make him the beginner of the new

people, a people that believes in Him and waits for the fulfillment of His promise, yes from whose midst the promised Redeemer should finally descend. For this reason there now begins a time of multiple and extraordinary revelations. God Himself unmistakably and repeatedly stands before Abraham, in his dreams at night, during his waking hours in the day time, in the shape of an angel, to make Abraham absolutely certain: there is a living God who interferes in our lives, can bless and finally send the promised Savior. The invisible God became visible, so that Abraham might cling to Him even when he did not see Him. It was not merit on Abraham's part that God selected and preferred him to all other men. Not because he already believed in God, did God thus reveal Himself in this extraordinary manner. But He revealed Himself to him and stood before him in order that he might learn to believe and grow stronger in such faith. His purpose was to train him to become the forerunner and father of all faithful (Rom. 4: 16—18), and all this as a matter of pure grace without any merit whatever on Abraham's part (compare Gal. 1: 15; Rom. 9: 11, 12).

God appeared to Abraham for the first time in Mesopotamia to induce him to **emigrate** from his new home at Haran. He was to be separated from all his relatives, so that he might not more and more forget the true God as they did. Of course, the people in Canaan, where God now led him, also served other gods, and in many ways were even more wicked than the members of his own tribe in Mesopotamia, but here there were no blood ties and it was easier for him to keep himself aloof from their evil influence. It was no easy proposition which God here put to Abraham, since He not even mentioned the name of the new country to which he was to proceed. Abraham was asked to exchange the certain for the uncertain, the visible for the invisible, the present for the future, and blindly follow God's leadership. But God never demands the difficult of man without promising him the great, and thus giving him the faith that is able to do the difficult. God also gave to Abraham the greatest **promise** (Gen. 12: 2, 3), in order to call forth the faith which is obedient to God. It was a threefold demand which God made of him (Gen. 12:1): Abraham should leave his country, his kindred, and his father's house. And it was a threefold promise which He gave him: God promises him a new **country**; in this country he, although already 75 years of age, and his wife reputed to be barren (Gen. 11: 30), was to become a great **people**; and he and his whole people shall be **blessed**

of God and shall even be a blessing for all men. From him and his descendants the promised Redeemer shall come who shall lead all men back to God.

With this wonderful promise God awakened faith in Abraham, i. e., the living trust and the impregnable confidence in the living God. This promise also gave him the staff on which to lean when all sorts of questions and doubts assailed him at his departure and especially also during his long journey. And even though his eyes saw nothing of the new home and the whole future remained blank, yet the promise put it before his mind's eye: land, people, blessing. And on this word he depended, and trusted his God to bring it to pass. Thus at the beginning of the history of the patriarchs there is, on the part of God, **grace** which appears to Abraham and gives him the promise, and on man's part, **faith** which leaving aside the visible and tangible depends upon the invisible gifts, held up before it in the word of promise (Hebr. 11: 1). And this is the dominant trait of this whole patriarchal period. And this is true also of Christian life to the present day: God in His grace descends to us in His Word, and we in faith cling to the promise contained therein.



City of Hebron.

And in this way to the present day, as with Abraham of yore (Gen. 12:4, 5), men come to the true obedience.

Like his father Terah Abraham was a wealthy nomadic prince. Thus it meant a caravan of 2,000—3,000 souls with countless sheep and cattle, when he together with Lot, the son of his deceased brother Haran, emigrated from Mesopotamia (Gen. 12:5; 13:2, 5, 6; 14:14). They journeyed in a southwestern direction, passing Damascus, crossing the Jordan, until they reached the city of Sichem in the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:6). Here the Lord again appeared to him and announced to him that this was the land He had promised. This again proved a test for Abraham's faith, for this territory was not uninhabited but already populated by the Canaanites. But Abraham stood the test. He had God's promise (Gen. 12:7), and that was sufficient for him. Though for many years he remained in the land of promise as in a strange country (Gen. 14:13; Hebr. 11:9, 10) and removed from place to place (Gen. 12:8—10), yet he knew, that God would ultimately fulfill His Word. He depended entirely upon God's Word. He not only built an altar unto the Lord and thanked Him for His gracious guidance, but he also preached the living God to the Canaanites living about him, and became the first missionary (Gen. 12:8).

Questions:—1. Into what three sections is the second part of Genesis divided?—2. In what chapters is the story of Abraham narrated?—3. Into how many sections may the life-story of Abraham be divided?—4. How far does the first section extend and what is narrated in it?—5. To what race of Noah's descendants did Abraham belong?—6. Where had the branch of Shemites, from which Abraham was descended, located after the dispersion?—7. About when was Abraham born there?—8. Where did the family migrate to after the death of Haran, Abraham's brother?—9. What do you know about the condition of religion in Abraham's home?—10. Why could God not permit all the Shemites to lapse into heathendom?—11. What did God do that His promise might be fulfilled?—12. For what reason, therefore, did God select Abraham?—13. How is the selection of Abraham by no means to be understood?—14. Where do the Scriptures say, that God's selection is always a matter of grace and never a reply to human merit?—15. What command did God give when He appeared to Abraham the first time?—16. Why was it necessary for him to leave?—17. Prove that it was no easy task that God required of Abraham.—18. What did God do to make the fulfillment easier?—19. What threefold promise did He make?—20. Why was the last the most important part of it?—21. What did God want to awaken in Abraham with this promise?—22. Why was it only possible

for faith to fulfill the divine command?—23. What two facts in the relation of God to man do we clearly observe at the beginning of the history of the patriarchs?—24. What is grace?—25. What is faith?—26. Describe the nature of true faith as exhibited in Abraham!—27. Where does the epistle to the Hebrews describe it in like manner?—28. What is the significance of divine grace and human faith for the Christian life to the present day?—29. Prove by Abraham's example that true obedience to God is only possible on the basis of faith!—30. What other test of faith did Abraham have to face when he had arrived in Canaan?—31. How did he stand the test?—32. From what can we clearly learn that his faith in God's power and faithfulness did not suffer in the least by this repeated test?

Such firm **faith** in the living God also proved the dominant trait of Abraham's life for the following years. He did waver at one time, indeed, namely when he removed to Egypt during the days of the famine, and there tried to conceal the fact that Sarah was his wife (Gen. 12: 10—20). But he soon regained his balance and returned to the full and unreserved trust in his Lord and God. Thus he permitted Lot to choose and did not despair when the latter selected the best land (Gen. 13: 1—13). He relied upon God, and trusted that He would finally give this land of Canaan to him and his descendants. And he was permitted to experience a renewal of God's promise, when God at this time again gave to him the entire land as his heritage (Gen. 13: 14—18). Living faith makes men peaceable and unselfish. It also makes for courage and strengthens them so that they will undertake great things. It was a manifestation of the courage of faith when Abraham later undertook to battle with **Chedorlaomer** and the other kings, who, coming from the east, attempted to invade the land, and led away as prisoners of war the people of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 14: 1—12). Had Abraham been of little faith he would have looked only upon the small number of his retainers and would have remained at home. But with the eyes of faith he also saw his God standing on his side, and trusted that He would be with him and give him the victory over these mighty enemies (compare 2 Sam. 22: 30; Ps. 118: 6, 7; Rom. 8: 31). The thought of the nearby cities and especially of Lot (Gen. 14: 12) constrained him to help, for faith in God produces sympathy with the troubles of men. At the same time this was an invasion of the territory promised him by God, which the kings of the east attempted, so that he felt called upon to be its protector, even though in the eyes of men he did not yet own a single square foot of it. And because

Abraham thus as an act of faith entered into battle he also gained a complete victory (Gen. 14:13—17). Yes, and he even experienced the distinction, that Melchizedek (= king of righteousness), the king of Salem (Salem = peace; in all likelihood Jerusalem) came to meet him, and recognized him, the foreigner and stranger, as the protector of the country and blessed him (Gen. 14:18—20).

In former days men loved to ridicule Gen. 14, and declared its account as incredible. Today inscriptions found in Susa, the capital of ancient Elam, and elsewhere, prove that the kings, mentioned Gen. 14, actually existed. A valuable compilation of laws coming from one of them, Amraphel (14:1), has even been handed down to us. Here again the Bible has proven its trustworthiness.—The Sacred Scriptures attach especial importance to Abraham's meeting with **Melchizedek** (Ps. 110:4; Hebr. 7:1—3). Melchizedek was one of the few who clung to the worship of the true God. He knew the "most high God, possessor of heaven and earth" (Gen. 14:19), and looked upon Him as the one who gave to Abraham the victory. He on his part united priest and king in one person. Thus he is a prototype of Jesus Christ, who as the Highpriest offered the sacrifice for sin-stained men and brought true righteousness, and now as King would give it to all men. Abraham was not indifferent to Melchizedek's gift and blessing. He looked upon it as a confirmation of the divine promise according to which he was to receive the entire land. He also humbled himself before Melchizedek and gave to him, as a priest of the Most High, the tenth part of the booty.—But he refused to accept even the least from the grateful King of Sodom. He will receive nothing from men, but everything from God. His faith assures him, that thereby he will never fall short (Gen. 14:21—24).

When Abraham had returned from his campaign against the four kings of the east all sorts of doubts began to assail him. What he had courageously done in the moment of enthusiasm, now after mature deliberation seemed foolhardy. The kings might gather a new army, return, and take bloody revenge! Fear began to torture his mind (Gen. 15:1). But here again the Lord appeared to him, and strengthened his faith: "I am thy shield (against the four kings) and thy exceeding great reward (for the deed of faith)!" And when Abraham undertook to remind God of the promise given him at his emigration (Gen. 12:2), which had not yet materialized, God repeats this promise in solemn and amplified form (Gen. 15:4, 5). And Abraham, as soon as his faith again received the promise, also immediately clung to it as his only but also reliable and sufficient support. Such faith pleased

God so much, that because of it **He counted it to him for righteousness** (Gen. 15:6). It is true that Abraham, too, was a sinner and many times sinned against God. But God would now no longer look upon this. All this He had forgiven him. He will look upon him as righteous and holy. He even condescended to give him an external pledge for his ultimate possession of Canaan (Gen. 15:8, 18). He clearly showed him in a vision, that He would, indeed, subject his descendants to the power of their enemies and lead them into much tribulation, but He would finally rescue them from all their enemies, and give them the country from Egypt to the Euphrates (Gen. 15:7—21). The beasts which Abraham divided at God's command are a symbol of his descendants, who shall be sorely afflicted, yes tortured to death (Gen. 15:9, 10). The birds of prey which pounced upon the carcasses (v. 11) are a symbol of the enemies. The descendants of Abraham shall serve a foreign people for "four generations" (v. 16), i. e., about 400 years. The great darkness also, and the horror that fell upon Abraham (v. 12), indicated the sore affliction to which his descendants shall be subjected. But when finally a lamp of fire passed between the pieces (v. 17), it was to show that God would finally come to the comfort and rescue of His people, lead them out of the foreign land and into the land of promise.—We know how this was fulfilled. Abraham's descendants migrated to Egypt, lived there for 430 years, at last under heavy oppression, until Moses led them from Egypt, and Joshua finally into the land of Canaan.

Questions:—1. In what chapters of Genesis is the life of Abraham told?—2. What part of his life does the first section describe?—3. What was the dominant trait of Abraham's life from the time of his migration?—4. On what occasion did he waver?—5. Enumerate the various occasions in which Abraham later on (chapp. 13—16) proved his faith?—6. In what way was it a proof of faith when he permitted Lot to choose the best land?—8. How did God strengthen him in this faith?—9. Apart from sympathy for the people of Sodom, what urged him on to battle against the kings of the East?—10. In what way was the circumstance that Melchizedek blessed Abraham a special mark of distinction for him?—11. What noble virtues had thus sprung from Abraham's faith according to the 13. and 14. chapters?—12. How was the Biblical account of Abraham's expedition against the Eastern kings recently and fully corroborated?—13. What kind of man does Melchizedek prove to be in the midst of the heathen of Canaan?—14. In what respect is he a type of Jesus Christ?—15. Why was Abraham not indifferent to Melchizedek's gift and blessings?—16. Why did he give Melchizedek the tenth part of the spoils?—17. Why on the

contrary did he accept nothing from the king of Sodom?—18. How was that at the same time a proof of his faith?—19. What doubts assailed Abraham when he returned from his campaign against the Eastern kings?—20. How did God dispel his fearful doubts for him?—21. Of what did Abraham remind God when he heard God use the word "reward"?—22. How did God respond to this quiet reminder?—23. And how did Abraham again prove his greatness?—24. What was God's answer to Abraham's faith?—25. What does it mean, God counted Abraham's faith to him for righteousness?—26. What external pledge for his ultimate possession of Canaan did God give Abraham?—27. Describe how God showed Abraham the future of the people descended from him in the vision of Gen. 15: 9—17!—28. When was this prophecy fulfilled?

2. Abraham's life from the solemn declaration of his righteousness to the making of the covenant and the birth of Isaac (Gen. 16: 1—21: 8).—Read Gen. 17: 1—10, 15—21; 18: 16—33; 19: 1—29; 21: 1—6.

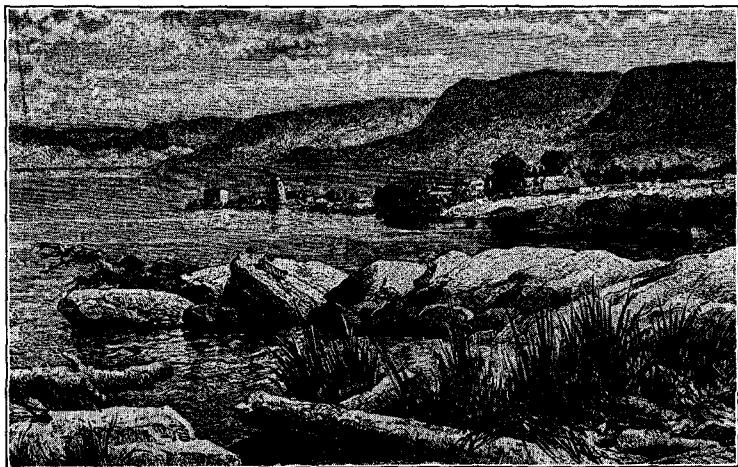
The time for the testing of Abraham had not yet come to an end. Although he had now lived in Canaan for ten years, and the Lord had solemnly renewed His promise after Abraham's courageous campaign against Chedorlaomer (Gen. 15), he did not yet possess a single square foot of the land as his own, nor had Sarah born him the promised son. Thus he wavered in his faith, and following the advice of his wife Sarah took her maid Hagar as a second wife, attempting in this way to fulfill the Lord's promise of descendants (Gen. 16: 1, 2). Sarah thereby in a way tried to assist the Lord. But God is omnipotent, and needs no assistance from men. Sarah together with Abraham only sinned against God, and caused herself and her husband much grief. Indeed Hagar did bear to Abraham, when he was already 86 years old, a son, namely Ishmael (Gen. 16: 16), but he was not the son promised by God, and he was not destined to become the ancestor of the Savior (Gen. 17: 20, 21).

Instead of continuing to wait, Abraham seems to have cherished the thought, that Ishmael after all was the promised one, especially as the wording of the promise until now did not expressly state that he should be born by Sarah (Gen. 17: 18). The Lord again appeared to him thirteen years later, when he was in his 99th and Sarah in her 89th year (Gen. 17: 1). God terms himself the Almighty God, for it was this fact that Abraham in his later years had too often overlooked, or he would not have relinquished the hope that the promised one should be born by Sarah. And he calls upon him to walk all the days of his life before His all seeing eye in perfection and innocence. In this respect Abraham during the last years had

not been altogether free from guilt, especially when he followed Sarah's advice and took Hagar as his second wife. Such weaknesses and sins must now forever be done away with. Abraham must return to his former firmness in faith and purity of conduct, and especially so since God was now about to bring His promises to pass.

In order that Abraham's faith might again become strong and rise above all doubt and fear, God comes to him. He re-iterates His promise in unmistakable terms, so that Abraham might again have something to cling to. He establishes an **eternal covenant** with Abraham, saying, "I will ever be thy God and the God of thy descendants" (Gen. 17: 4, 7, 8). There shall be a special relationship of love and grace between God and him and his descendants, much more intimate than with any other man or any other people. And Abraham shall gratefully cling to this covenant, and never forget that the Almighty God has entered into this special covenant and has selected him so that he might serve Him as his God and Lord. As a constant reminder of the fact that, notwithstanding his age, purely as a matter of the omnipotence of God, he shall become the ancestor of many peoples, God changes his name Abram—for thus had he been called till now—into Abraham, for Abraham means "father of many." And so that he might know that the promised son shall be from Sarah and none else, God also changed her name from Sarai to Sarah, for Sarah means "the fruitful" (Gen. 17: 15, 16). God also commanded Abraham to circumcise every man child in his household. **Circumcision** should be the sign of the covenant between God and his tribe and people. Whosoever is not circumcised shall be cut off from the people forever (Gen. 17: 10, 11, 14). What a condescension on the part of God thus to unite with Abraham and his descendants! It is the foundation of all later covenants between God and Abraham's people, the people of Israel. No wonder, that Abraham's former faith was revived in all its fullness, and he bowed down before God. Now he would again wait and hope until God fulfills all promises. For this reason he also circumcised every male in his house, that none might be excluded from the covenant with God. And circumcision forthwith remained an institution with all his descendants, the whole people of Israel. We also understand how the custom of giving the name came to be associated with circumcision (Luke 1: 59; 2: 21). The higher antitype of circumcision is Christian baptism (Col. 2: 11), which does not only receive us into the external fellowship with the people of God, but by means of which God in truth and fact becomes our father and we His children (Tit. 3: 5, 6; Gal. 3: 26, 27).

The making of this covenant marked the beginning of a new period in Abraham's life. Now again and again God appeared to him as in the days of yore when he left his former home and during his first years in Canaan. Chapter 18:1—15 tells us, how God soon after the making of the covenant appeared as guest in Abraham's house, and predicted the birth of the promised son for the coming year, and also converted Sarah to the trust in His omnipotence (v. 9—15, especially v. 14). Such an appearance of God in the form of man is called theophany. It was the greatest condescension of God toward Abraham, and the noblest type of the incarnation of Christ. In the incarnation the second person of the Godhead did not only clothe Himself with the form of man, as with a dress, but by being born, really assumed flesh and blood of man (John 1:14; Heb. 2:14; Gal. 4:4), so that in the incarnate Son of God we can fully recognize the kindness and love of God toward man (Tit. 3:4; 2:11).—Chapter 18:16—33 tells us how intimate the relation between God and Abraham was, so that God thought He could not conceal the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah from him (v. 17—19), and Abraham stood before God and conversed with Him as a friend with his friend. It tells us how Abraham courageously interceded for Sodom and wrung from God the promise, *I will not destroy the cities for the sake of*



South End of the Dead Sea

ten just. Chapter 19: 1—29 informs us how God destroyed the cities because of their sins, thus again most terribly revealing His punitive justice, but how for Abraham's sake He saved Lot, thus in the midst of the judgment again manifesting His grace. Indeed, Abraham still stumbles now and then, thus when he concealed from Abimelech that Sarah was his wife (Gen. 20:2), but the Lord in His grace overlooks it, and in his hundredth year He gives to him the **promised son** born to Sarah (Gen. 21: 1, 2). Not until now is he born although promised for 25 years, so that it might be obvious that he was not born from natural force but is a gift of divine omnipotence (Rom. 4: 17—21). No wonder that Abraham called him Isaac (i. e., joy, laughter) for in Isaac God had given him and Sarah laughter and joy. It was not in vain that Abraham remained firm in his faith. His son was the evidence of divine omnipotence and faithfulness, a pledge that God would also graciously redeem all other promises. When Isaac was 8 days old he was circumcised by his father. He, too, should have part in the covenant which God had made with Abraham.

Questions:—1. Into how many sections may we divide the story of the life of Abraham?—2. How far does the first section extend?—3. In what chapters is it described?—4. How far does the second section extend?—5. In what chapters do we find it described?—6. How had the promise that God had given progressed ten years after Abraham's migration?—7. What effect did that eventually have on Abraham's faith?—8. What incident proves that Abraham wavered in his faith?—9. How are we to estimate Sarah's action?—10. Why did Abraham have to continue in waiting?—11. What mistake did Abraham make now?—12. Why did that betray a lack of faith?—13. How did God 13 years later, lead Abraham back to his former firmness of faith?—14. Why did God at this revelation call Himself the Almighty God, and call upon Abraham to walk before Him in perfection?—15. What did God do to make it easier for Abraham to believe?—16. What does it mean, He established an eternal covenant with him?—17. How should Abraham show his gratitude to God for entering into such covenant relationship with him?—18. What changes did God now make in Abraham and Sarah in order to constantly remind them that from them a great nation should descend?—19. What was to be the sign of the covenant on the body of all his male descendants that should assure them of having part in the covenant?—20. What is the significance of this covenant of God with Abraham for all time?—21. In what way is circumcision a type of baptism?—22. What in the deportment of Abraham shows that God had realized His purpose and had led Abraham to his former firmness of faith?—23. And what

shows that a new period in Abraham's life began with the making of the covenant?—24. Enumerate the most important revelations of God as they now followed closely upon one another!—25. What was God's chief object when with two angels He appeared in the form of man as guest in Abraham's house?—26. How do we call such appearances of God in human form?—27. What are we to find in them?—28. In what way is this gracious appearance of God in Abraham's house a type of the incarnation of Christ?—29. From what other story can we learn how familiar the relation between God and Abraham was?—40. What can, and what should believing Christians learn from Abraham's attitude toward God for their own communion with God?—31. What principle of divine government can you draw from Gen. 19:1—29?—32. When was Abraham permitted to experience the realization of what he had hoped for for 25 years?—33. Why did God not permit the realization earlier?—34. Why did Abraham name his son Isaac?—35. And why did he circumcise him eight days after his birth?

3. **The life of Abraham from the birth of Isaac to his death** (Gen. 21: 9—25: 10).—Read Gen. 21: 9—21; 22: 1—19; 23: 1—20; 24: 1—67; 25: 7—10.

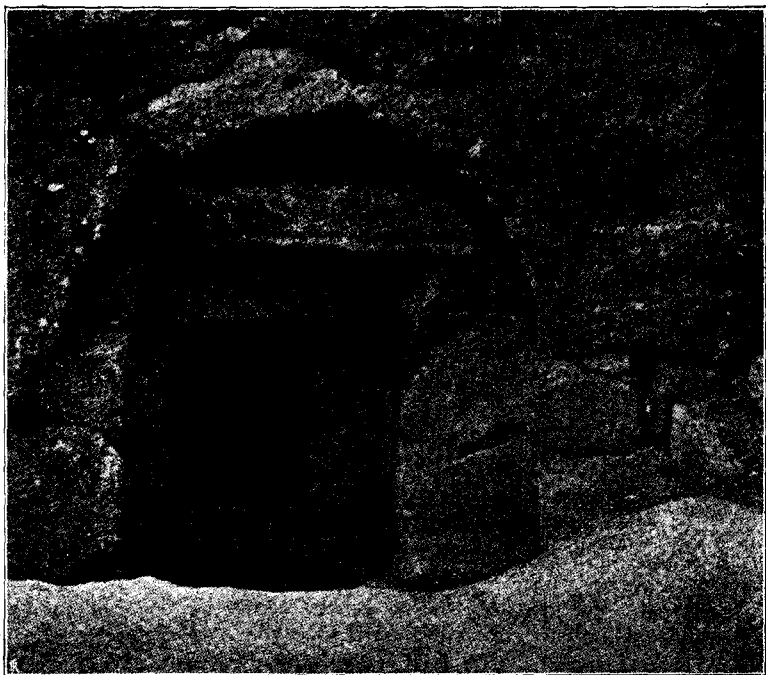
As Isaac grew up Ishmael's true nature (Gen. 21:9) became manifest, and Sarah was made to suffer for the evil counsel she had given to Abraham. Sarah, indeed, now sinned against Ishmael and his mother Hagar (21: 10), but this only served completely to separate Ishmael and his descendants from the son and people of promise (v. 12). For Abraham's sake (v. 13) God not only preserved Ishmael's life but also made him a great people. To him the Arabs, the sons of the desert, trace their lineage. And for this reason the Mohammedans from Arabia still know Abraham and honor him highly. Next to Mecca, where their prophet Mohammed was born, they revere the birthplace of Abraham as their most sacred shrine.

Since in Isaac the promised son was now born to Abraham and grew up to his great joy, the one from whom later the Redeemer was to come, his hope for the final possession of the land of Canaan was also strengthened. **Abimelech**, king in the land of the Philistines, now came to form an alliance with him, to insure mercy for himself and his people at the hands of Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 21: 22—34). He now already greeted Abraham as the future master of the country. Thus had God blessed Abraham, that strangers looked upon his friendship as a sure pledge for their own future (compare Gen. 12: 2, 3)! No wonder that Abraham provided for the future, planted a grove in Beersheba where Abimelech had come to him, and there called on the name of the Lord, the "everlasting" God (Gen.

21:33). He knew from experience that God is faithful, and he trusted that God would remain faithful for all time to come.

Finally Abraham's faith was put to a most severe test. God commanded him to sacrifice Isaac, his only son, for whose birth he had waited so long, and who according to God's own word was to be the blessing for all nations. It was a test of his love, to show whether he loved God more than his son. At the same time it was a test of his faith, to show whether at the same time he is capable to give up his son in death, and yet cling to the fact that from him the Savior and thus "blessing" was to come for all men. Abraham passed the test. He went to sacrifice his son. Thereby he proved to men the sterling quality of his faith (James 2:21). The Epistle to the Hebrews reveals to us (11:17—19), how he made it possible. He trusted that God would be able if it need be to raise his son from the dead, in order to redeem His promise, as in the same wonderful way he had caused him to be born by Sarah when she was past age. In this assurance of faith he said to the young men at the base of the mountain, "We will come again to you" (Gen. 22:5). As soon as Abraham had steeled his heart to the death of Isaac (v. 3), and clung to this determination during the three days of the journey, and would not be thwarted by the childlike questions of his son (v. 7, 8), and as soon as he had taken the knife to slay his son: just so soon in the eyes of God the sacrifice was already made and Abraham had triumphantly passed the test. The external sacrifice of Isaac, which God had never purposed, might now well be left undone. Abraham's faith had "endured" (James 1:12), it was found righteous and more precious than gold that is tried by fire to prove its quality (1 Pet. 1:7). For this reason the promise, which he had received at his migration from the land of his fathers, was now renewed in an especially forceful way (Gen. 22:16—18), and this time as a reward for the obedience of faith (v. 16, 18).—The interference of God at the very moment when Abraham was about to slay his son, has once for always put human sacrifice, the culmination of heathen darkness, to an end, as something not willed by God. And the fact that God "provided Himself" a ram (v. 8) as an offering, sanctified the offering of beasts for the Old Testament era, and until Christ with His own sacrifice on the cross once for always abrogated all bloody sacrifices (Hebr. 9:12, 28; 10:10, 14). Like Isaac, Christ also Himself bore the wood for the offering, the cross, to the mountain. As Abraham in his love for God was willing to sacrifice his only son, the heavenly

Father in His love for lost mankind "spared not His own Son" (Rom. 8:32; John 3:16), "but delivered him up for us all," and at the same spot, for Moriah (Gen. 22:2) is the site of the later Jerusalem. Thus God's thoughts went from Isaac to Jesus, from Moriah to Golgotha. And yet men deny the divine origin of the Old Testament!



A Jewish Family Sepulchre

In this faith, which made him willing even to sacrifice his only son, and which now again seized upon the gracious promise, Abraham continued until his death. When Sarah, who notwithstanding her temporary vacillations yet remained not only the faithful associate of his life but also of his faith and hopes, had passed away, Abraham, firmly believing that Canaan would become the property of his descendants, secured the cave of Machpelah in the land of promise,

according to the laws of the day covering the purchase of property, as a family sepulchre. He thus in advance put his hand upon the land as his property. For this reason he would not receive it as a gift from men (Gen. 23: 1—20). He insisted on an indubitable property right.—This same faith prompted him when later he sent **Eliezer** as the emissary to the old home to find a wife for Isaac (Gen. 24:7). He will not be entangled with the people about him whose land he expects later to receive, and least of all with their idolatry. This two-fold fact is beautifully shown Gen. 24, namely how Abraham's faith looks only upon faith and the fear of the Lord and how God Himself rewards this trust by giving to Isaac the proper helpmeet for his life. And in addition to this it is also noticeable how Abraham's faith helped to train his environment to the same fear of God, otherwise Eliezer could never have stood and prayed with such simplicity and sincerity as he did at the well of water (v. 12—14). And if Abraham after Sarah's death married Keturah (Gen. 25:1) he did not forget that Isaac, and Isaac only, was the promised bearer of salvation, chosen of God, and the ancestor of the Redeemer (v. 6).

Abraham continued in the faith until he died, 175 years of age. His sepulchre was the cave of Machpelah which his faith had purchased. But his soul was gathered to his people (v. 8) comforting itself in the hour of death with the eternal city which his faith beheld, where in place of the sojourn as in a strange country on earth is the enduring home for the faithful of God (Hebr. 11: 13, 9—10).

Questions:—1. Into what three sections may the story of Abraham be divided?—2. Where do we find the first, the second and the third one recorded?—3. As Isaac grew up how did Ishmael's true nature become manifested?—4. In what way was this a well-deserved punishment for Sarah?—5. How did Sarah now only add to her sin?—6. In what, however, was Sarah's hardness toward Hagar and Ishmael to result according to God's will?—7. To whom did Ishmael owe it that his life was preserved and he received the promise of a great future?—8. What do you know of the tribe that descended from Ishmael?—9. How was Abraham's expectation of eventually owning the whole of Canaan again strengthened after the expulsion of Ishmael?—10. How does Abimelech's attitude toward Abraham forecast the fulfillment of the promise in Gen. 12:2—3?—11. How did Abraham in Beersheba prove that he trusted God's promise that his descendants would inherit Canaan?—12. When was Abraham's faith finally put to the severest test?—13. In what respect was God's command to sacrifice Isaac a test of Abraham's love?—14. And in what respect was it also a test of his faith?—15. What passage in the Epistle

to the Hebrews permits us to glance into Abraham's mind and to learn how faith succeeded in standing this test?—16. In the light of this confident faith, what word of Abraham to his servants can no more be regarded as a hollow phrase?—17. And what answer to Isaac in like manner?—18. When was the sacrifice God demanded from Abraham really made?—19. So Abraham's faith had really endured, even though what had not actually and externally taken place?—20. What had God therefore done in the last moment?—21. From what can we see that God's purpose in commanding the sacrifice had been fully gained?—22. When God hindered the actual, external sacrifice of Isaac, what did He at the same time reject as contrary to His will?—23. And when He provided for Himself a ram for the sacrifice, what did He once for all sanctify for the Old Testament era?—24. When were all bloody sacrifices to be abrogated?—25. Compare the sacrifice of Isaac with that of Christ on the cross!—26. Show how this is a proof of the remarkable unity of the Scriptures!—27. How did Abraham prove his immovable faith in the reliability of God's promises when his wife Sarah was to be buried?—28. How was he guided by the same faith when he sought a bride for Isaac?—29. What are the principal facts so beautifully shown in Gen. 24?—30. Show by Eliezer's conduct that Abraham trained his servants in the true faith!—31. How did Abraham prove his faith when he married Keturah?—32. Prove from Gen. 25:7—10 that Abraham continued in the faith to his dying day.

4. Isaac's life (Gen. 25:19—26:35).—Read Gen. 25:27—34; 26:1—6.

How varied and rich in experience the life of Abraham may have been, quiet and simple was the life of Isaac. God also appears to him, and in the most solemn way assures him that he shall be the one through whom blessing shall come to all peoples and from whom the Redeemer of all men shall spring forth (Gen. 26:3—4, 24). And many other traits of Abraham's life are repeated. And yet there is a vast difference. As Abraham is characterized by the energy of a firm faith, Isaac is marked by his patience and forbearance. As a youth already he patiently bore the wood for the sacrifice to Mount Moriah (Gen. 22) and permitted himself to be put upon the altar. Without remonstrance he marries the woman selected for him by his father (Gen. 24). Patiently he bears the many offences of his neighbors, who envy him for his possessions (Gen. 26:12—14, 20—21). He would rather submit and move away than defend his rights. And he is permitted to experience that God Himself transforms his enemies into friends (Gen. 26:26—31). After twenty years of patient waiting he is blessed with descendants, and the words spoken before

the birth of the twins, Esau and Jacob, "The elder shall serve the younger," augur many conflicts. And, indeed, both sons cause the father much sorrow (Gen. 26:34, 35; 27:1—29, 41—45). Isaac then retreats from the stage of history. His greatness is found in his patience and suffering and confidence.

5. **The life of Jacob to his return from Mesopotamia** (Gen. 27:1—33:20).—Read Gen. 27:1—40, 41—46; 28:1—22; 29:1—20; 31:1—3; 32:1—32; 33:1—16.

Jacob was chosen from the two sons of Isaac to be the bearer of salvation, the progenitor of the Redeemer. For God had already said before the birth of the twins, the elder shall serve the younger (Gen. 25:23). Jacob had not merited this. Indeed God for this reason had chosen him before his birth, that it might be clearly seen, that when He selects some one for special work in His kingdom, He does not look upon the labors of man, but in **all freedom** chooses whomever He sees fit (Rom. 9:10—16). As it was free, non-merited grace of God, that He chose Abraham to begin the new era on earth, and that He selected Isaac and not Ishmael to continue His work, it was the same free and non-merited grace that He now chose Jacob and made him the bearer of the promise. By nature he was no more adapted for this than Esau, for if the latter was of a coarse and unbridled disposition and thoroughly worldly, the former was crafty and cunning, and not at all select in the means employed (Gen. 25:27—34; the word plain here means quiet and domestic). Jacob thus, too, must first be trained by God for his calling. And, indeed, all of God's rulings in his life to the time when he returned to the land of his fathers, had no other purpose than to train him to be the bearer of his promise.

How **necessary** such training was is shown, in addition to Gen. 25:27—34, especially by the sad story of the cunning employed to get the birthright (Gen. 27:1—29). The father here also sinned, for contrary to God's express will he would give to Esau the blessing of the firstborn (Gen. 27:1—4, 21—29). And Rebecca also sinned, for she acted as if God had grown weak and needed her help to carry out His will, and that with falsehood and deception. She did not hesitate to subdue whatever of fear for the fruits of sin might remain in Jacob (Gen. 27:5—17, especially v. 11—13). But Jacob also grievously sinned, for he trod underfoot the reverence for his father, exploiting and abusing his blindness, only to secure the blessing of the firstborn for himself (Gen. 27:18—27). He did not wait until God turned the blessing to him, he chose rather stealthily to secure it by

his own cunning. Indeed, he was sadly in need of proper training, and must needs become a new man from the bottom up, before God could use him! Still he received the blessing as God had predicted, and without any curtailment (compare Gen. 12: 2, 3; 15: 4, 5; 17: 4—8; 22: 17—18; 26: 3—4), for God is a gracious and faithful God. But what might have been the most blessed hour of his life must needs become the most painful, namely when he stood before his blind father as a deceiver. And what might have accompanied him throughout life as a sweet remembrance that must needs become a source of constant pangs of conscience. Thus sin destroys the best things in life.

Isaac submitted to God's will, when he became aware of the deception. He did not recall the blessing to Jacob, nor did he transform it into a curse. He also refused to give to Esau a like blessing notwithstanding his entreaty (Gen. 27: 30—40; compare Hebr. 12: 17). "Removed from the fatness of the earth shall be thy dwelling and without part in the dew of the heaven from above," he said to Esau (for thus v. 39 should be translated). And this coincides with the fact that the descendants of Esau, the Edomites or Idumaeans, inhabited the barren mountain section Seir in the southeastern parts of Canaan, which is as sterile and unproductive as few other sections, so that God might well say with reference to this fact (Mal. 1: 2, 3; compare Rom. 9: 10), "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated!" Since Esau is destined to live in so unproductive a land he will sustain himself by his sword. And he will even, though temporarily, secure freedom and power for himself, yet on the whole he will be as one who is subject to his brother. And not until at last will he throw off the yoke, which Jacob has put upon him, and become a master. This also was fulfilled. The Edomites withstood the descendants of Jacob when these came from Egypt to Canaan, and stopped them from passing through their land. Later they became Israel's most restless and malicious neighbors and could only be subdued with much effort. At different times they liberated themselves and with tireless industry and laborious effort transformed parts of their barren land into garden spots of advanced culture. When Herod became king in Jerusalem, an Idumaeon, a descendant of Esau, ruled over Israel, the descendants of Jacob.

Questions:—1. Into how many sections is the second part of Genesis divided?—2. How far does the first, the second and the third section extend?—3. Where, therefore, do we find the life of Abraham described?—4. Where the life of Isaac?—5. How was Isaac assured that he was to be the bearer of the blessing for all nations?—6. How did Isaac respond to this

revelation of God?—7. With what two facts do we meet again when we consider the relation between God and Isaac?—8. What great difference, however, is apparent between Abraham's life of faith and that of Isaac?—9. Show by examples that Isaac's faith is characterized by patience and forbearance, rather than by energy and deeds!—10. What joyful experience did God permit him to make in the end because he was peaceful and submissive?—11. Show how many traits in the life of Abraham are repeated in Isaac's life?—12. What Word of God spoken before the birth of Isaac's sons augured many conflicts in his later life?—13. How many chapters of the Bible treat of Isaac's life exclusively?—14. Who now steps into the foreground?—15. How far does the story of Isaac's life extend?—16. From which chapter on, however, does the story of Jacob, his son predominate?—17. Into what two great divisions does the story of Jacob's life fall?—18. What words, spoken before the birth of the twin boys intimated that Jacob and not Esau was to be the bearer of Salvation, that is, the progenitor of the Redeemer?—19. What can you clearly demonstrate from the fact that he was chosen of God for this position even before his birth?—20. Show that by nature he surely was not fitted for such a high position!—21. What would God have to do with him first?—22. What two incidents in his life show with special clearness that such training was necessary?—23. What are we to think of Jacob's deportment in Gen. 25:27—34?—24. In what chapter, however, do we meet with a veritable volume of human sin?—25. How did Isaac, the father, sin?—26. How especially Rebecca, the mother?—27. And how Jacob, the son?—28. How would you explain it that Jacob really received the blessing in spite of his grievous sin?—29. What on account of his sin, did this hour bring him, which might have been the most blessed hour of his life, if he had waited God's time?—30. Why did Isaac not recall the blessing when he noticed the deception?—31. What hard future did he afterwards foretell for Esau?—32. Prove that this prophecy was fulfilled!—33. What words of the prophet Malachi and the apostle Paul can you now understand?—34. In what, however, was Esau to be successful, according to Isaac's words?—35. On the whole, however, what was to be Esau's position?—36. Explain from the history of Esau's descendants that they temporarily liberated themselves and harassed the descendants of Jacob often!

God permits no sin of His people to go unpunished. Thus Isaac, Rebecca, and Jacob were taken to task either for opposing God's express purpose (Isaac) or because they thought themselves called upon to help Him accomplish His purpose by resorting to cunning and deception (Rebecca and Jacob). The aged Isaac is forced to send his son away, Rebecca to give up her favorite—and here again she did not tell Isaac the full truth—and Jacob to be exiled in a strange

land for a long time (Gen. 27:41—46; 28:1—5). When during his flight for his first night's rest Jacob laid his head on a stone, he surely also thought of his sin, and no doubt he asked himself, whether God would redeem the blessing he had secured through his cunning and deceit. God gives him answer in appearing to him in a dream (Gen. 28:10—15). Here He also proves Himself the One, faithful and gracious, who will redeem even the blessing secured by stealth, because He had destined it for him from the beginning. The vision of the ladder set upon the earth and reaching up to heaven with the Lord standing above it, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it, should say to Jacob: There is a connection between heaven and earth. God, indeed, dwells in the heavens but He sends His messengers from there and will also send His angels for the protection of Jacob (compare Ps. 34:7; 91:11). What God said to Jacob to comfort him in the imagery of the ladder, He also said in plain words (v. 15), and then Himself solemnly repeated the blessing which He had given to Abraham and Isaac (v. 13, 14). In spite of his sin Jacob shall be the bearer of salvation, the ancestor of the promised Savior. Awakening from his sleep Jacob realized that he had received a special revelation from God. He recognizes the place as a place of the revelation of God (v. 16, 17), and calls it Bethel, i. e., house of God (v. 19). The stone on which his head rested he anoints with oil, to differentiate it from others, and to consecrate it to the special service of God. He promises, that if the Lord will keep him in the way that he goes and safely bring him back again, He shall be his God, that he will use the stone as the foundation stone of a house of God, and that of all the goods with which the Lord will bless him, he will return the tenth part to the Lord, i. e., use it for purposes of the house of God. But the fact that Jacob makes his faith conditional upon these things shows that his faith is still very defective and much in need of purification and testing. His sojourn in the strange land was to serve such purification of his faith, and thus help to train him to be the bearer of salvation.

His sojourn in the strange country was long and painful. God did indeed lead him to the house of his uncle Laban, suffered him to gain the love of Rachel, and acquire much wealth in cattle (Gen. 19:18—20). God did more for him than He had promised (Gen. 28:15) or Jacob had prayed for (Gen. 28:20). Selfish and treacherous Laban deceived him time and again. In the first place he fraudulently gave him Leah instead of Rachel to wife, and became the reason why Jacob contrary to the original regulation of God (Gen. 2:23, 24;

Matth. 19:4—6) lived with two wives, a fact that brought quarrel and discontent into his house, and much bitter grief for him (Gen. 37). Then perhaps ten times he changed his wages, because he envied him for the blessing which God put upon his work, and he used his strength to the utmost wherever he could (Gen. 31:38—42). Since Jacob had deceived his father and brother, he must now as a punishment and for the purpose of purification himself experience how painful it is to be deceived. Jacob, alas, had not yet learned to depend wholly and exclusively upon God. He still thought that he must resort to all kinds of crafty means. When the attitude of Laban and his sons grew ever more hateful (Gen. 31:1, 2), God commanded Jacob to return to the land of his fathers. In spite of the pressure and the cunning of Laban he was enabled to return with his large family—meanwhile eleven sons were born to him, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, and Joseph (Benjamin, like Joseph, a son of Rachel, was not born until after the return to Canaan)—and many menservants and maidservants, and large flocks of live-stock (Gen. 30:43). God's blessing proved stronger than the hostility of man. Fear of Laban prompted him to leave Mesopotamia secretly, and God also protected him against Laban when he pursued him for the purpose of doing him harm (Gen. 31:4—9, 11, 13, 14—16, 17, 18, 22—25), so that they parted in peace. Yes, and God opened his eyes that he saw the angels which He had sent him and his people to protect them (Gen. 32:1, 2). It was the counterpart of Bethel, where he had seen the angels ascending and descending between heaven and earth.

The nearer Jacob came to the **boundaries of Canaan**, the more he thought of Esau and feared his wrath. And his fear grew apace when the messengers, he had sent to his brother, returned with the report, Esau is coming to meet thee and four hundred men with him (Gen. 32:3—7). This not only forced him to make careful provision (v. 7, 8, 13—20), but above all things forced him to his knees in **prayer**, for he clearly perceived that his own adroitness could not save him. It is a splendid prayer, characterized by grateful humility as well as filial trust (Gen. 32:9—12). In view of the richness of the blessing which God had showered upon him in the foreign land, Jacob can say nothing but, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast shewed unto Thy servant!" And his prayer for protection against Esau he supports by the remembrance that God Himself had given him the blessing of Abraham and Isaac at his flight from home, and had now bidden him to return.

Thus in the manner of true prayer he appeals to God's own word (Ps. 27:8). It is obvious, this is not the former Jacob.

And yet another serious understanding between God and Jacob is necessary before he can enter the promised land. For this reason God met him in human form at the borders of Canaan, at the ford of the river Jabbok, and wrestled with him in mysterious combat (Gen. 32:24—31). It was a real physical struggle, though Jacob did not at first know with whom he wrestled. But when the stranger by a mere touch put his thigh out of joint, he recognized who his opponent was, and how God could destroy him in a moment if He so willed. Now Jacob's eyes were also opened as to the meaning of this struggle. He realized, because of sins, God is his opponent and can not permit him to enter Canaan until the sin of the past, the sin of getting the blessing by his cunning, is wiped out. And then the combat also became a spiritual struggle, an earnest struggle of prayer and faith. In this Jacob did not desist until he had wrung from God His blessing and thus the forgiveness of his sins. When he had gained this, God parted from him and the sun rose upon him. It was the natural sun, indeed, that rose and dissipated the shades of night, but with the blessing wrung from God the sun rose in another sense also, the fear and unrest was taken from Jacob, the sun of grace rose upon him, and he knew that he had found the peace with God. Old things were passed away, all things are become new. For this reason he called the place **Peniel**, i. e., face of God, and said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved!" Not until now, when old things were passed away, and Jacob no longer desired to be something of himself, but everything in God, the way to the land of promise was opened. Jacob was now trained to be the bearer of salvation, and now, too, Esau could not but meet him with friendliness (Gen. 33:1—16). Jacob purchased ground in the land of promise and showed his **faith** in the promise, and following the example of Abraham and Isaac (Gen. 12:8; 13:4; 26:25), became a preacher of the powerful God of Israel (Gen. 33:17—20). With the new name, **Israel** (i. e., prince of God, Gen. 32:28) he became new himself and entered upon the new chapter of his life, to continue under divine guidance the history of salvation begun by Abraham and Isaac. **Grace** had not taken its hand from him, until it had brought him to **faith** and thus made of him a useful instrument, the bearer of salvation and ancestor of the Redeemer.

- Questions:**—1. Where is the story of Abraham recorded?
—2. Where that of Isaac?—3. And where that of Jacob?—4.

How far does the first section of Jacob's life-story extend?—5. From what story especially have we learned that Jacob must needs be trained before he could become the ancestor of the Redeemer?—6. How were Isaac, Rebecca and Jacob punished for the grievous sins they had committed on that occasion?—7. In what way did Rebecca thereby sin once more?—8. What thoughts may Jacob have pondered in his soul when during his flight he rested his head on a stone?—9. How did God respond to them during the night?—10. What was the vision of the ladder to tell him?—11. What more did God do that Jacob would rightly understand the vision?—12. What may have seemed most precious to Jacob in the words of God?—13. Here again we perceive that God is what?—14. How did Jacob indicate that he recognized the place as a place of divine revelation?—15. What did he want to express by anointing the stone upon which he had rested?—16. What solemn promise did he then make?—17. From what can we tell that his faith as yet was very defective and that he needed further training?—18. In what way did he experience God's good pleasure at the beginning of his stay in a strange land?—19. How did he have to experience in his own life that it hurts to be deceived?—20. In what relation does polygamy, into which Laban cheated Jacob, stand to the divine institution of marriage?—21. How did Jacob learn that polygamy will not go unpunished?—22. What incident proves that Jacob had not yet learned to depend wholly and exclusively on God?—23. Nevertheless Jacob had learned a great deal in the hard school of adversity; what did God therefore finally do when Jacob's position with Laban grew ever more distressing?—24. What tangible proof did Jacob have at the beginning of his homeward journey that God had kept His word and blessed him beyond asking?—25. How did God keep His promise given at Bethel, when Jacob secretly left for Mesopotamia?—26. With whom would Jacob have to come to terms the nearer he came to the boundaries of Canaan?—27. How did he make double preparation for his meeting with Esau?—28. Upon what did he not want to depend solely?—29. What is the characteristic of his prayer to God?—30. How did he remind God of His promises in the manner of true prayer?—31. What serious understanding, more so than that with Esau, was still necessary before he could enter the promised land?—32. How are we to estimate this combat with God at the ford of the river Jabbok?—33. By what did Jacob recognize that God and not a man was his opponent?—34. What did he now realize to be the true significance of this combat?—35. How did it happen that Jacob emerged from this combat as victor?—36. Of what could he take the rising sun as a sign?—37. Why did he call the place Peniel?—38. What proved to him in the morning that peace had been established and that God's grace was with him?—39. What new name was constantly to remind him of this change in his life?—40. How did he prove after his return that in firm faith he clung to the promise that

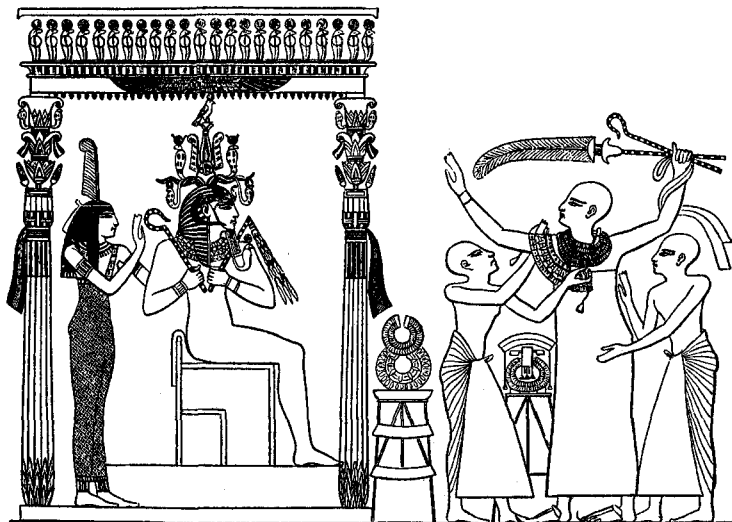
Canaan was to be his and his descendants?—41. What was the final result of the training to which God had subjected Jacob?—42. In what capacity could the grace of God now employ him?

6. **Jacob's life from his return to Canaan to his death (Gen. 35: 1—50: 25).**—Read Gen. 35: 1—20; 37: 1—36; 39: 1—12; 39: 12—23; 40: 1—23; 41: 1—45; 41: 46—42: 38; 43: 1—44: 13; 44: 14—45: 15; 45: 16—46: 7; 46: 28—47: 12; 47: 27—48: 22; 49: 1, 8—12, 18; 49: 28—50: 14; 50: 15—26.

Jacob had already been in the country for some time when, pursuant to God's express command (Gen. 35: 1), he went to Bethel, where on his flight God had appeared to him in the dream, and he had promised to build a house of God (Gen. 28: 12—19). He felt, that many things must first be changed in his family. For this reason he initiated a great cleansing in his house and put out all heathen things (Gen. 35: 2—4). And God appeared to him at Bethel and solemnly renewed the blessing. Jacob on his part also fulfilled his vow (Gen. 35: 9—15). Then slowly he pushed farther south. In the vicinity of what later was Bethlehem his wife Rachel died at the birth of Benjamin and was buried there by him (Gen. 35: 16—21). Not until ten years later did he come to his father Isaac in the neighborhood of Hebron and there located permanently. It was a part of his well merited punishment that he did not again see his mother during her lifetime. His father, Isaac, however, lived for 13 years more after his return to Hebron, dying in his 180th year. He was interred by his two sons Jacob and Esau in the cave of Machpelah by the side of Rebecca (Gen. 35: 27—29).

Jacob's cup of suffering was not yet emptied to its dregs. God uses suffering not only to draw men to Him but also the more to purify them, whom He has already drawn. Jacob's sons caused him much grief by their carnal and impure and also treacherous disposition, and especially when moved by their envy in the most heartless way they sold his dearest son, their brother **Joseph**, into slavery in Egypt (Gen. 37). They thereby became the precursors of Judas who sold his Lord and Master for 30 pieces of silver. True, God, who also uses the sins of men to carry out His plans, here, too, had His own thoughts. It was a punishment for Jacob for his favoritism for Joseph (Gen. 37: 3) and was meant to deepen his faith. It was a test also for Joseph to prove his fear of God and trust in God, and through humiliation and exaltation so to lead his life that it became a prototype of the life of Jesus Christ. It was meant to

lead the brethren of Joseph, who saw the inconsolable grief of Jacob over his favorite son (Gen. 37:35), and who later, through the treatment they received at Joseph's hands, were reminded of their sins (Gen. 42-44, especially 42: 21, 22), to true repentance. It was meant to keep many nations alive during the famine, since they could come to Egypt and purchase the grain stored at Joseph's advice (Gen. 45: 5-7; 47: 13-26; 50: 20). But above all things, God would thereby lead Jacob and his whole house to Egypt, so that they might develop into a nation, and thus be fulfilled what had been said to Abraham in the vision (Gen. 15: 13-16). But all this neither decreased the sins of the brothers, nor yet lessened the suffering for Jacob. We understand how Jacob could say to Pharaoh, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been" (Gen. 47: 9).



Installation of a High Egyptian Officer.

It was not in vain, that Joseph had grown up in the house of Jacob, the bearer of the promise. He had learned the faith in the living God, who must not be offended by sin (Gen. 39: 9), and who holds His hand over His own even in the strange land. In the midst of this heathen environment he remained true to this faith and continued to trust the God of his fathers, not only when He humiliated

him by putting him into prison, but also permitted him to languish there as though He had completely forgotten him. He accepted his ultimate elevation as a gracious gift of his God (Gen. 41:51, 52; 45:9) and remained humble in fortune, anxious to forgive his brethren (Gen. 45:4—8). And even after he had become lord of Egypt he still proved himself to be the faithful son who cared for his father and ever sought what gave his father joy (Gen. 45:9—13). He did not disdain him though he was as shepherd and nomad despised in the eyes of the Egyptians (Gen. 46:28—34). He even introduced him to Pharaoh (Gen. 47:7—10). Thus he stands before us a man of faith, rich in virtue, a splendid and heart rejoicing fruit grown on the tree of patriarchs.

It was God Himself who led Jacob and his people to Egypt. For this reason He appeared to him at the southern border of the land, at Beersheba, and gave him the promise, that He would lead him and his people out again (Gen. 46:1—4). **Seventy souls** did his family number when they left the land, women, manservants and maidservants not included. In Gen. 46:8—27 all of them are mentioned by name. When all are added they number several thousands. Thus had God blessed Jacob. Joseph knew how to arrange things so that Pharaoh assigned the land of **Goshen** to Jacob and his sons (Gen. 45:10; 47:1—6). This was a rich pasture land, situated in the northeastern part of Egypt. Here they dwelt by themselves and had ample opportunity for development.

Before his death Jacob adopted the two **sons of Joseph**, Ephraim and Manasseh, as his own and thus preserved them from being absorbed by the heathen Egyptians. At the same time he thus gave to his favorite son Joseph, through whom the whole tribe had been kept during the famine, a twofold portion in the promised land (Gen. 48:1—6). At the same time Jacob blessed them with a special blessing, preferring the younger Ephraim to the older Manasseh (Gen. 48:13—20). And in later years Ephraim assumed a leading position. For the kingdom of the ten tribes, which after Solomon's death separated from his son Rehoboam, stood under the leadership of Ephraim and was called the "Kingdom of Ephraim" (Isaiah 7:2). —When Jacob felt his death approaching he **blessed** all his sons and inspired of God prophesied what would befall them in later years (Gen. 49:1—27). Indeed this significant blessing unfurled the whole future of the twelve sons of Jacob and thus of the twelve tribes of Israel that grew forth from the twelve sons. The center and height was the blessing of **Judah**, the fourth son. Judah shall come to

great power. He shall couch as a lion, whom no one shall rouse up, and finally from him shall "Shiloh" come, i. e., the hero, the bringer of peace, to whom the gathering of the people shall be, i. e., the Savior promised Gen. 3:15 and 12:3 (Gen. 49:8—12). Judah thus shall be the ancestor of the Savior. Jacob on his deathbed did not forget the position assigned to him by God. Judah shall now be the bearer of salvation. But Jacob did not depart from this life without looking for the promised salvation (Gen. 49:18), and not until he received the pledge from his sons to bury his remains in the promised land, in the cave of Machpelah. Thus he again solemnly confessed his faith in the gracious promise of God.

As the sons had promised, they interred their father in the sepulchre Machpelah, Joseph leading (Gen. 50:2—14). At the age of 110 years Joseph followed his father in death, but not until he had assured his brothers of his full forgiveness and received their promise to take his remains with them, when they migrated from Egypt, and bury them in the promised land (Gen. 50:15—26). Joseph's life also ends with an unmistakable confession of his faith in the gracious promises of God, so that the whole period of the patriarchs ends in the two-fold fact which from the very beginning stood radiant above it, God's **grace** and man's **faith**. The era of the patriarchs has much to tell us about human sin. Sins against the sixth commandment seem to abound and to draw, particularly Jacob and his generation, at times into the very depths of heathendom. Scripture does not conceal this, for it is truthful and calls all things by their proper name. But Scripture also shows that God punishes sin and that the faith in God's grace is the one means to overcome it. The **penitent** and believing sinner is permitted to experience, Where sin abounds, God's grace much more abounds (Rom. 5:20).

- Questions:—1. Into how many sections have we divided the life-story of Jacob?—2. How far does the first section extend?—3. What does the section narrate?—4. In what chapter of Genesis is this section recorded?—5. What vow did Jacob finally fulfill after his return?—6. What did he first have to change in his own family?—7. How did God again reveal to him that he was to be the bearer of salvation, the progenitor of the Redeemer, through whom blessing was to spread to all nations?—8. What happened on the way from Bethel to the South, in the vicinity of where Bethlehem later stood?—9. How many years after his return did he meet his father?—10. What suffering did he now experience that was a part of his punishment?—11. How long did Isaac live after Jacob's return?—12. Where did his two sons bury him?—13. Where had Jacob, for

a number of years already, permanently located?—14. What was God's purpose when he made Jacob further drink the cup of suffering?—15. What did this further suffering consist of?—16. Whose precursors did the sons of Jacob become when they sold their brother Joseph into slavery?—17. In the sale of Joseph we can learn that God can also use what to carry out his plans?—18. What was his purpose by the sale of Joseph with regard to Jacob?—19. What with regard to Joseph?—20. And what with regard to Joseph's brethren?—21. What was to be the significance for many nations of the sale of Joseph and what grew from it?—22. What above all were God's plans regarding all of Jacob's descendants?—23. What, of course, is not lessened though God makes use of man's sin for His own purposes?—24. In whom are we to recognize the most beautiful fruit grown on the tree of patriarchs?—25. In what chapters is the story of Joseph told?—26. What does the first part of this story treat of?—27. And what the second?—28. Show how he feared God above all things during his humiliation!—29. Show how he trusted God above all things during his humiliation!—30. How did he accept his ultimate elevation?—31. What sin would have been especially tempting when God suddenly elevated him so highly?—32. Show by his behavior toward his brothers that he did not succumb to this sin!—33. Show it too by his behavior toward his father!—34. For what purpose did God appear to Jacob when he was on his way to Egypt and Joseph?—35. How large was Jacob's family when they migrated to Egypt?—36. And if you counted the manservants, the maidservants and the children, what may the number have been?—37. Why did Joseph arrange with Pharaoh to have the land of Goshen assigned to his father and brethren?—38. Why did Jacob adopt the two sons of Joseph before he died?—39. Why do you find it significant that Jacob preferred the younger to the elder son when he blessed them?—40. What can you perceive from Jacob's blessing upon his sons?—41. How do you understand the blessing for Judah?—42. From what words, the one spoken in paradise, the other to Abraham, did he proceed?—43. How did Jacob, once more before his death solemnly confess his faith in God's gracious promises?—44. How did Joseph prove his firm faith that Canaan was the land of promise?—45. What two-fold fact stands at the close of the era of the patriarchs as it did at the beginning?—46. Show that the Christian life must also rest upon grace and faith!

EXODUS TO DEUTERONOMY.

The Second to the Fifth Books of Mō'ses (E'xodus to Deutero'nomy) relate the story of the people of Īs'ra'el from their oppression in Ê'gÿpt to their arrival at the borders of Cā'nāan and the death of the great leader and prophet Mō'ses.

The circle has again begun to widen. The history of the patriarchal era was really the story of one family. But the family of the patriarchs has developed into a people, the people of Īs'ra'el, so called because of the new name which God had given to Jā'cob at Peniel (Gen. 32:28). As the family of Ā'brā'hām, Ī'saac, and Jā'cob was God's own, thus the people of Īs'ra'el grown out of this family and chosen from the nations of the earth are God's people (Ex. 19:5, 6). To them God would reveal Himself specially by word and deed. It was from their midst that He would call forth the Redeemer of the world, and their entire history from the exodus from Ê'gÿpt should be nothing more or less than a preparation for this great event (Gal. 4:4).

The history of salvation from now on is inseparably conjoined with the history of Īs'ra'el, the people of salvation.

The second Book of Mō'ses (Exodus) is divided into four parts, for 1:1—15:21 describes the sojourn of Īs'ra'el in Ê'gÿpt and its deliverance through Mō'ses; 15:22—18:27 describes the journey of Īs'ra'el from the Red Sea to Mt. Sī'nāi; 19:1—24:18 relates the solemn making of the covenant at Mt. Sī'nāi; and 25:1—40:38 shows how God dwelt in Īs'ra'el as His chosen people.

1. Israel's sojourn in Egypt and its deliverance through Moses. Exodus 1:1—15:21.

a. The oppression of Israel in Egypt.—Read Ex. 1:6—22.

God had His own thoughts when He led Jacob and his family to Egypt. He had a two-fold purpose in mind. Jacob's family was here to develop into a people, which knew itself separated from all other peoples and clung to the faith in the living God and His



An Egyptian Master of Slaves Giving Commands.

promise. This could be better accomplished in Egypt than in Canaan. In Canaan the descendants of Jacob would have been forced to live in the midst of the Canaanites, and the danger of becoming mixed with them and falling away from the true God would have been great. In Egypt, however, they were locally and geographically separated from the heathen inhabitants, for they dwelt by themselves in Goshen. And besides, there was no intercourse between them and the Egyptians, for Egypt was dominated by castes, and shepherds were an object of contempt for Egyptians (Gen. 46:34). On the other hand Egypt at the time was a highly civilized country. So that if Israel on the whole was separated from the Egyptians, yet they did learn this from them, that later in Canaan from a nomadic people they became a settled people with fixed location, carried on agriculture, built houses and cities, and performed the various labors peculiar to a fixed location.

The children of Israel lived for 430 years in Egypt. During this period a people of $2\frac{1}{2}$ million souls grew from the 12 sons of Jacob (Ex. 1:6-7). Thus was realized what God had promised to Abraham (Gen. 12:2; 15:5; 17:6; 22:17). Though the children of Israel, as Jacob's descendants are now called, during the first centuries of their sojourn in Egypt enjoyed complete liberty and unhindered development, this was changed when a new king came into power who knew nothing of Joseph, nor of the great good he had done for Egypt (Ex. 1:8). This marks the beginning of a period of severe oppression for Israel (Ex. 1:9-22). What the Bible here tells us of the rise of a new king, is, in a way, confirmed by other accounts outside of



A Semitic Family Immigrating Into Egypt.

the Bible narrative. These inform us of an invasion of a Shemitic people of shepherds, the Hyksos, who, coming from Asia, penetrated into Egypt (about 2100 B. C.), conquered Lower and Middle Egypt, and were driven out again about 500 years later (1600 B. C.) by the king of Upper Egypt. Israel's immigration took place, perhaps, during the reign of these shepherd kings, the Hyksos, and the king of Upper Egypt, who expelled the Hyksos and reconquered Lower and Middle Egypt, may have been the new king, "who knew not Joseph." We do not know his name. In former days Rameses II (about 1388—1322 B. C.) was regarded as the Pharaoh of the oppression and his son Merneptah as the Pharaoh of the exodus (Pharaoh is not the given nor surname, but the title of the Egyptian sovereign). But of late this has become doubtful. The dates of Egyptian history have not been sufficiently scrutinized that definite statements can be made. Nevertheless some extra-Biblical testimony affirms, that the exodus may be placed at about 1500—1400 B. C., which also coincides with the dates of the Bible.

It is easily understood how the new dynasty might hit upon the idea, that in case of war the children of Israel might support the enemy (Ex. 1:10). Though part and parcel of Egypt, they had maintained their racial traits and at the exodus numbered not less than 600,000 men (women and children not included, all together $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions). Besides they were Shemites like the expelled Hyksos and bound to the latter by ties of gratitude. To stop their multiplication and curtail their liberty they were sorely oppressed. And this oppression became ever more severe and cruel. At first they were forced to heavy labor (Ex. 1:11—14). They were made to make bricks of clay and to build cities with large storehouses for the king



Head of the Mummy of Rameses II.

and his armies. They were forced to do heavy work out on the fields, dig trenches, for instance, to lead the waters of the Nile to the fields, or to do farm work. One of the two cities built by the Israelites and mentioned Ex. 1:11 has been excavated and there were found ruins and remnants of the ancient storehouses. The oppression was increased when Pharaoh commanded the midwives, i. e., the women who assisted the mothers in Israel at childbirth, to slay all male children immediately after birth (Ex. 1:16). And it reached its culmination point when all Egyptians were ordered to throw every male child of the Israelites as soon as it was born into the water (v. 22). Fear and hatred had so blinded the king that he determined completely to extirpate the people that furnished him with his best laborers (Ex. 14:5).

In God's hand this oppression became the means of bringing Israel back to a more sincere faith in Him, to make them yearn for new revelations (there had been none for 400 years), and to remind the people that Egypt was not their home, that Canaan had been promised the fathers as their lasting possession. The yearning for deliverance should be revived in their hearts. Passages like Ex. 1: 17; 2: 23, 24, 25; 4: 31 show that God gained His purpose.

Questions:—1. Into how many parts is the first book of Moses divided?—2. What does the first part relate?—3. What does the second part relate?—4. In what chapters is the story before the flood narrated?—5. What chapters tell the story of the flood?—6. In what chapters do we find the story after the flood to the dispersion?—7. Where is the story of Abraham recorded?—8. Where the story of Isaac?—9. Where Jacob's story?—10. And where that of Joseph?—11. What do the second to the fifth books of Moses relate?—12. What great development do we meet with when we compare this story with the one that began with Gen. 12?—13. This development agrees perfectly with God's plan, for what was His purpose when He selected Abraham and revealed Himself to him alone?—14. Why are the people that grew out of the family of the patriarchs called "Israelites" or the "People of Israel"?—15. Where did God expressly state that the people of Israel were to be His people, elect as He had elected Abraham?—16. What would He do for his people though He permitted the other nations to follow their own course?—17. In whom was this revelation to culminate?—18. And for whom was salvation then to be provided through the Redeemer, born in their midst?—19. What even was to be the relation of the whole history of Israel to the birth of the Redeemer of the world?—20. Where does the apostle Paul say that the history of Israel was a preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ?—21. In what book of the Bible is it narrated how God separated Israel from all other nations and selected them as the bearers of salvation?—22. Into how many parts is the book of Exodus divided?—23. How far does each of the four parts extend?—24. What does each one relate?—25. Into how many sections is the first part of Exodus divided?—26. What does the first section tell us?—27. What was God's purpose in leading Jacob and his whole house into Egypt?—28. Why was it easier in Egypt than in Canaan to keep Israel separate from other nations and to preserve their faith in the living God and His promises?—29. In what respect was the culture of Egypt to prove of value to the Israelites?—30. What was fulfilled when Israel increased so rapidly in Egypt?—31. To what number did the descendants of Jacob increase during the 430 years of their sojourn in Egypt?—32. What great change took place in their condition after Joseph's death?—33. In how far do extra-Biblical documents corroborate the report of this change?—34. What king of Egypt has often been

regarded as the Pharaoh of the oppression?—35. How can you account for it that the new king also was called Pharaoh?—36. About when may this change have taken place?—37. Why is it easily understood that the new king should oppress Israel?—38. Show that the oppression became sorer step by step!—39. In what did the oppression reach its culmination point?—40. One could see that the king had determined upon what?—41. What, however, was God's purpose with this sore oppression?—42. What proves that this purpose of God was gained?

b. God prepares Moses to become the instrument for the redemption of His people (Ex. 2: 1—6: 27).—Read Ex. 2: 1—21; 3: 1—4, 17; 4: 27—31; 5: 1—9; 5: 19—6: 1.

While the children of Israel were still crying to God in their distress, God had already caused to be born from the tribe of Levi, the later tribe of priests, him who was the savior of his people. The name of the mother already indicates that the home was one characterized by the living faith in the God of the Fathers. For Jochebed (Ex. 6: 20) means, the Lord is my glory. The beauty of the lad who was born to them (after the birth of the older Aaron and his sister Miriam) was an indication for the parents that God had intended him for special things. And they trusted God to preserve him from the cruel hands of the Egyptians (Ex. 1: 22). By this faith his mother hid him for three months in her house (Hebr. 11: 23). And in this same faith she dared to put him in an ark of bulrushes and place him in the flags by the river's brink (Ex. 2: 1—4). And her faith was not in vain. God, who orders and rules all things on earth, both great and small (Ps. 95: 4, 5; 104: 6; Acts 17: 26, 28; Matth. 10: 29—31) so ordained that the boy was miraculously preserved. Yes, He who fashions the hearts of men (Ps. 33: 15) softened the heart of the king's daughter (Thermutis or Meris is said to have been her name) that she took the child to the royal court, and he was trained like one of the royal princes. She named him Mo-udsche, according to the Egyptian language (= drawn out of the water), which the Israelites later transformed into Mosche or Moses, i. e., leader or savior. Here at the royal court of Egypt already God began to train Moses for his later career. He had him instructed in all the wisdom of the world of that day (Acts 1: 22). He taught him how to rule a great people. He acquainted him with the conditions of Egypt and the surrounding countries. Without this apprenticeship at the Egyptian court Moses could hardly have become the savior, law-giver, and leader of the people of Israel.

But Moses also studied the history of his own people. He learned

about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. He heard how the living God revealed Himself from heaven, most wonderfully led His people, and gave them the promise of a glorious future. Whether he found notes written by Joseph and the patriarchs, or whether he only heard his people tell about the times of their ancestors, we do not know. By all means God informed him of the fact that He only is the true God, and that He intends great things for the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that he (Moses) himself according to his birth is one of these descendants. Moses never disdained this relationship with the hated Israelites, persecuted though they were by the royal house. Rather did he rejoice in the promise given them, and preferred to be with this people rather than to fill some lofty and easy position at the royal court. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob became **his** God, and their despised descendants **his** people. Trusting in the faithfulness of God, who would surely fulfill His promises given to the people of Israel (Hebr. 11:24—26), he was ready to relinquish everything which hitherto had made his life pleasant and beautiful. And finally even the thought that God might see fit to use him as the savior of his people took shape in his mind. He felt confident that he could successfully undertake this great work. He thought that he had learned all things necessary to do so. If the Israelites would only recognize that he could and would help them in their distress. He did not even shrink from killing an Egyptian who had beaten an Israelite (Ex. 2:11, 12). But these sinful and selfchosen ways never lead to what is good. Instead of being able to help the people he was forced to flee, and his sojourn in the desert for forty years gave him ample opportunity to reflect, how little one really accomplishes when one walks on selfchosen paths and depends on one's own strength and wisdom (read Jer. 17:5—8; Ps. 118:8, 9; 146:3, 4). God must first destroy this strength and make him small before He can use him as **His** instrument, for "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6).

The land of **Midian** to which Moses fled is situated on the peninsula of Sinai, on the northeast branch of the Red Sea. The inhabitants were a small people of shepherds, related to the Midianites on the north and east of the bay. They possessed a fully developed system of offerings and priesthood, at the head of which at that time was Reuel also called Jethro (Ex. 2:18 and 3:1). Through the noble assistance which he rendered Reuel's daughters, Moses came into the house of Reuel and became his son-in-law (Ex. 2:15—21). This sojourn, too, provided a splendid school for Moses. During these

forty years which he, who had lived at the court of the king, now spent as a simple shepherd in Midian, God trained him to true humility. It was also well for him, that he here came in contact with a well developed system of offerings and priesthood, for he was later at the command of God to establish such a system for Israel. The names which he here in the strange land gave to his two sons indicate that he did not forget his people in Egypt nor the God of his fathers (Ex. 2:22).

Questions:—1. Into how many parts is the book of Exodus divided?—2. What does the first, the second, the third and the fourth part relate?—3. Into how many sections is the first part divided?—4. What does the first section treat of?—5. What does the second section treat of?—6. Why did God permit the sore Egyptian oppression to come over Israel?—7. What proves to us that His purpose was gained?—8. In what way had God anticipated Israel's need and arranged for help out of it?—9. What may we infer from the name of the mother of Moses?—10. What conclusion did the parents of the child arrive at when they saw his beauty?—11. What did they therefore trust to God?—12. What did their faith in God's preserving power prompt them to do?—13. Show how wonderfully God had ordered everything that the mother's faith should not come to shame!—14. What did Pharaoh's daughter name the child?—15. Why did she call him Mo-udsche?—16. How does it happen that later he was called Moses?—17. In what way did God prepare Moses at the royal court for his later tasks as redeemer, law-giver and leader of Israel?—18. Since Moses was reared at the royal court he was regarded as an Egyptian, what, however, did he nevertheless learn?—19. What more did he become familiar with?—20. In what way may he have become familiar with Israel's history, especially the story of the patriarchs?—21. What did he learn from this wonderful history, so full of the revelation of God?—22. What change then took place with him?—23. What great temptation was given with the knowledge that Abraham's God was his God and Israel his people?—24. How did he overcome this temptation according to Heb. 11:24—26?—25. What thought even took shape in his mind?—26. How did he propose to show the people of Israel that he was ready to deliver them from oppression?—27. Why was that all wrong?—28. What did it actually lead to?—29. What should we learn from this?—30. What must God first do before He could use Moses as redeemer?—31. Where is Midian, whither Moses fled?—32. How did Moses get into the house of Jethro, also called Reuel?—33. Of what great importance for his later office was Moses' stay in Jethro's house?—34. What indicates that Moses did not forget his people in Egypt nor the God of his fathers while he was in a strange land?

At last the period of trial for Moses and the period of waiting for the children of Israel had passed away, and God prepared to save them (Ex. 2:23-25). Moses should be the savior. And to call him for this office **God appeared** to him in the burning bush on Mount Horeb or Sinai. And from the bush that "burned with fire, and was not consumed" God spoke to him, to show him a two-fold fact: 1. As hopeless as the condition of the bush is when consumed by fire, so hopeless is the condition of Israel in Egypt. If left to its own strength it must surely perish. 2. But as God is in the bush and speaks from its midst, so that it can not be consumed, thus God will be with Israel and preserve it from destruction (Ex. 3:1-3). This appearance of God has made that place a sacred place, separated from all unclean land and land accursed because of sin (Gen. 3:17, 18), for God is holy, and hallows all places where He communicates with men (compare Gen. 28:17; Ex. 19:10, 11, 16-25; this is why the tabernacle and the temple later were looked upon as sacred places). For this reason Moses must stand afar off, and put his shoes off his feet, for like every Oriental, Moses wore his shoes not as a protection against the cold but as a safeguard against pollution. At a sacred place he does not need this protection, and before the holy God the sinner can only stand afar off and with covered face (Ex. 3:4-6). God revealed Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is come to show mercy to Israel and fulfill the promises given to the fathers, and Moses shall be the instrument by means of which God will rescue Israel from the bondage of Egypt, and lead them past Sinai to Canaan (Ex. 3:6-12).

How Moses should have rejoiced! But since he himself is to be the leader, he can not rejoice, but is filled with misgivings. He, who before meant to rescue Israel through his own power, now had so many objections to offer even though God promised to be with him (Ex. 3:11, 12). And in this lack of faith in the omnipotence and protection of God he even went so far as to refuse to follow the divine call (Ex. 4:13). Whether he thought of Pharaoh (Ex. 3:15-22) or the people (4:1-9) or himself (4:10-17), he saw nothing but obstacles, and regarded it as altogether impossible to deliver Israel. Here it is very pleasant to note how God condescended to Moses, took away his objections, strengthened him with promises and miracles, and did not speak harshly to him until he put his "I will not" over against the word of God (Ex. 4:13-17).

It is especially important to note, that God here terms Himself the "I am that I am," or to be more exact and according to the

Hebrew "I interfere." Since 400 years had elapsed since God revealed Himself to Jacob and Israel was forced to undergo these long and heavy oppressions at the hands of the Egyptians, the people felt entirely forsaken of God. If God still lived, He seemed to be enclosed in heaven, and unable to interfere and help on earth. Therefore this was the greatest comfort to know, the God of the fathers who came to Moses is the "I interfere!" That was sufficient guarantee for their deliverance, especially since they knew, as God's name is, God Himself is. His very essence is expressed by His name. Later this name became so precious to them that they preferred to call Him "He interferes" (Hebrew: "Jehovah" or more correctly, "Jahve." The Authorized Version renders this as "Lord," while the American Version has adopted "Jehovah").

When Moses had learned from God's anger over his unwillingness that it was, indeed, God's will that he should go to Egypt and deliver Israel, he no longer hesitated. The promise, that his eloquent brother Aaron should be his spokesman before the people and Pharaoh, while he himself should perform the divine miracles (v. 16), strengthened his courage (Ex. 4:14-17). God also informed Moses that the Pharaoh who had sought his life was dead (Ex. 4:19; compare Matth. 2:20); and that Moses might not become totally discouraged by the repeated refusal of the new Pharaoh to permit Israel to leave, God also foretold both, namely, 1) that Pharaoh would harden his heart, 2) but that God would finally, namely through the slaying of his firstborn son, force him to permit Israel, whom in His Grace He had chosen before all nations to be His firstborn, to leave (Ex. 4:18-23).

Thus Moses entered upon his journey to Egypt. A vision which he received taught him that God was not yet satisfied with him, and Moses while on his journey circumcised his son which hitherto he had neglected to do (Ex. 4:14-16). The fact that Aaron, whom he had no means of informing of his coming, should meet him at Mt. Sinai, and that the people of Israel should so readily recognize him as the rescuer sent of God, assured him of the fact that God was with him, and that he would succeed in his purpose (Ex. 4:27-31).

But even yet his training to be the instrument of God was not finished. He must still pass through **another school**: Pharaoh curtly rejected his demand and only oppressed the people the more, so that they now thoroughly discouraged, only heaped abuse upon Moses (Ex. 5:1-21). But Moses passed the test. For instead of foregoing the attempt, to deliver the people, as something impossible, he appealed

to the Lord, and submitted to Him his whole discouraging experience (Ex. 5:22-23). The Lord comforted him and with many consoling promises sent him back to Israel, to encourage the people. Especially should he be comforted by the name of God, "Jahve," i. e., He inter-feres (Ex. 6:1-8). Though Israel overwhelmed by its sufferings and lamentations could not yet place full confidence in Moses and God (v. 9), still Moses is ready again to appear before Pharaoh, since God commanded it, and to perform the great work of delivering Israel (Ex. 6:10-13). Trusting in the help of God he again under-took the great work. And since his training to be the instrument of God is now completed, and he is to prove himself the savior of Israel, he reports his descent, so that men might know who he is whom God had chosen to redeem His people.

Questions:—1. How far does the first part of the book of Exodus extend?—2. What does the first section treat of?—3. And what the second?—4. What did God first do with Moses in order to prepare him as His instrument for the redemption of His people?—5. How long did the training school in the wilderness last into which God took Moses?—6. What did God do in order to call Moses as the redeemer of the people?—7. How many things did God want to teach Moses when He spoke to him from a bush that burned with fire and was not consumed?—8. What was the first?—9. What was the second?—10. How did God's appearance make the place on which He appeared?—11. How does this agree with the fact that Moses was told to put off his shoes from his feet?—12. How did God reveal Himself to Moses; as who?—13. And why did He so reveal Himself to him?—14. Why did Moses not rejoice when God called him?—15. What change had taken place with Moses when we compare him now with what he was formerly?—16. He now had doubts though God had given Him what promise?—17. Whom did he consider in his many doubts?—18. How did the thought of Pharaoh raise doubts in him?—19. How the thought of the people?—20. How the thought of himself?—21. What is especially admirable when we consider the discussion God had with Moses now?—22. When first did God speak harshly with Moses?—23. By what name did God call Himself on this occasion?—24. What do these words exactly mean according to the Hebrew?—25. Why was this name a great comfort for Moses and the people just at this time?—26. What must they take the name of God to be, if the people could take so much comfort in it?—27. What change did they later make in His name when they called upon Him?—28. In what person did they, therefore, put it instead of the first?—29. When at last was Moses ready to go down to Egypt?—30. What promise of God made it easier for him to go?—31. What did God for the same purpose tell him?—32. What

did He do in advance that Moses should not be discouraged by Pharaoh's refusal?—33. For what purpose did the vision appear to him when he was on his way to Egypt?—34. In what way was the meeting with Aaron a strengthening of Moses' faith?—35. In what way did the first appearance before Pharaoh prove another training school for Moses?—36. How did Moses stand this new test?—37. How did God respond when Moses in his prayer complained to God of his failure?—38. In what way was the reminder of God's name "Jahve" to be an encouragement for him?—39. For whom was it more difficult to keep faith in Moses and God?—40. How did Moses now undertake his work?—41. What do we learn now, when the training of Moses as the instrument of God is completed in Ex. 6: 14—27?—42. To what must we permit God to train us, before He can make use of us?

c. **Jehovah struggles with Pharaoh for the people of Israel** (Ex. 6: 28—13: 16).—Read Ex. 7: 1—11: 8; 12: 1—14, 19—37.

And now the Lord, as His name implies, Himself interferes, and a unique struggle between God and Pharaoh ensues, in which should be made manifest which is the stronger, Pharaoh's obstinacy and the power of his gods or the omnipotence of the God of Israel and His power to save.

The Lord makes Moses a "god to Pharaoh" (Ex. 7: 1), i. e., He gives him power over Pharaoh and his people, so that no man can resist him. Through Moses he brought one judgment after the other over Pharaoh to make him relent, so that he might bow before God as the mightier one and suffer Israel to go. 1. He changed the water of the Nile, on which all life and health in Egypt depends, into blood (Ex. 7: 15—21); 2. He filled the land with frogs, so that the Egyptians could no longer save themselves from their depredations (Ex. 8: 1—6); 3. He sent lice or mosquitoes who gave no rest to the Egyptians by day or night (Ex. 8: 16—18); 4. He sent swarms of flies or hornets upon them who tortured men and beasts (Ex. 8: 20—24); 5. He sent a grievous murrain, i. e., a plague or pestilent disease, upon the cattle, so that it died by the thousands and tens of thousands (Ex. 9: 1—6); 6. He permitted boils with blain to come upon man and beast, causing excruciating pain (Ex. 9: 8—11); 7. He sent a grievous hail which killed every man and beast found in the field (Ex. 9: 13—26); 8. He sent myriads of locusts that covered the fields and ate the residue which remained from the hail (Ex. 10: 4—15); 9. He changed bright day into thick darkness, so that no one could rise from the place where he was; this darkness lasted three days (Ex. 10: 21—23). And in order to bring about these plagues God employed the natural con-

ditions of Egypt, where similar phenomena sometimes occurred. But 1. because at this time they occurred with singular vehemence, 2. because they followed one upon the heels of the other, 3. because Israel living in the land of Goshen was partly exempt (Ex. 8:22, 23; 9:4), 4. because they came and disappeared at Moses' command, it is clearly evident, that they were not simple phenomena of nature, but real miracles, i. e., happenings that were not due to natural disturbances but to the special intervention of God. They were meant to show to Pharaoh and all Egyptians, that the God of Israel is far superior to any of their gods (compare Ex. 8:19), that He alone controls the elements, and that He is the Lord over all the world, yes, that He is present even in Egypt and can protect His people against all evil. In order to make them more impressive God permitted the plagues to appear in a certain order, growing worse and worse. The first three enveloped the entire land and for that reason might the more be looked upon as mere natural phenomena. But beginning with the fourth Israel was exempted and only the Egyptians were struck. Beginning with the seventh they increased in violence to such an extent, that they completely overshadowed anything that went before, and thus were well adapted to show even to the most obstinate mind, that on all the earth there is no God like the God of Israel (Ex. 9:14). The Egyptian magicians were able to repeat the first two miracles through the help of the devil (Ex. 7:22; 8:7), but in view of the third they were forced to admit, "This is the finger of God" (Ex. 8:19) and beginning with the sixth they were so moved that they could no longer stand before Moses (Ex. 9:11).

And yet in view of all these wondrous deeds of God Pharaoh **hardened** his heart and refused to recognize the power of God. The first three plagues made no impression at all upon his mind, though the frogs did finally become uncomfortable and he prayed for their removal (Ex. 7:23; 8:15; 8:19). The fourth, at which God for the first time put the cleavage between Egyptians and Israelites (Ex. 8:22, 23), moved him to say, that Israel might sacrifice to God in the land, or that they may also go into the wilderness, only they shall not go far away (Ex. 8:25-28). But as soon as the plague was removed, he revoked his concession (Ex. 8:32). The violence of the last plagues, indeed, so frightened him, that twice he even confessed to have sinned (Ex. 9:27; 10:16) and promised to permit Israel to leave, at first men only, but finally their families also (Ex. 10:11, 24). But no sooner were the plagues removed when he returned again to his former scorn (Ex. 9:34, 35; 10:20). And finally when Moses insisted that they

must also take their flocks with them, he became so incensed, that he drove the messengers of God, Moses and Aaron, from his presence, and forbade them ever again to appear before him (Ex. 10:28, 29). Fully to appreciate this, the fact must not be overlooked, that the Scriptures differentiate between the hardening of Pharaoh's heart as a voluntary act brought about by himself, and as brought about by God. Up to the fifth plague we read, he hardened his heart (7:13, 14, 23; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7), but beginning with the sixth we read, the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh (9:12; 10:20, 27). In 7:3 and 4:21 the final result, known to God, is foretold as a consolation for Moses. Thus as a **punishment** for the fact that Pharaoh hardened his heart, i. e., rendered it hard and unimpressionable for the wondrous deeds of God, God himself finally hardened his heart so that no impression remained. This hardening through the ministration of God was the penalty for the preceding voluntary hardening on Pharaoh's part. Thus it is with all hardening of the heart to the present day (e. g. John 12:40).

God, indeed, did not carry out his will with the nine plagues, for Pharaoh still kept Israel in bondage, yet He was not yet at the end of his resources. One plague more will he send and then Pharaoh will not only permit Israel to leave, but the Egyptians will also drive them from the land (Ex. 11:1). He will slay all the **first-born** in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh to the firstborn of the maid-servant, and all the firstborn of beasts, whereas among the Israelites not even a dog shall move his tongue, i. e., not the least harm shall be done (11:4—7). And thus it came to be, so that in Egypt there was not a house where there was not one dead (Ex. 12:29—30). This broke Pharaoh's obstinacy. He himself urged Israel to leave, and the Egyptians even gave to the Israelites as they left the gold and silver, which they demanded, and all sorts of garments, a small and just compensation for the burdensome labor to which they had been subjected (12:31—36). God had conquered in this struggle with Pharaoh, and had earned and won Israel as the people of his possession.

But he did not deliver Israel without at the same time proving their faith. Thus as a test of faith he commanded each man to kill a lamb without blemish, and strike the blood to the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, and to eat the flesh in a common meal with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, and meanwhile to be dressed and ready for the journey (Ex. 12:1—13). God did not need this sign at the doorposts for himself (12:13). He well knew

Israel's houses even without this distinguishing mark and could have passed them by (passover). But he commanded this, so that it might be manifest whether they would obey his Word, and trust him to preserve them from death and really deliver them. Israel passed the test. It slaughtered the lamb, struck the posts of the doors with its blood, and made itself ready for the journey (12:28). But this sign language of the paschal lamb was also to signify for the people, that its deliverance was not due to its own power but only to the **grace** of God. As a matter of fact, Israel had merited the anger of God and death no less than did the Egyptians, but God intervened, and ordained that a lamb without blemish should die in their place, so that through its death a sacrificial blood might be gained, to save sinful Israel from death. The innocent blood of the lamb, according to God's will, was to cover up the sins of the people before the eyes of God, and thus safeguard them from divine wrath and judgment. If God in his grace had not intervened and ordained this protecting and covering blood, nothing could have saved Israel from death. But thus it could celebrate the sacrificial meal in its homes at peace with God and men, whilst outside death stalked through the land and God's wrath smote the Egyptians. Since God himself thus commanded the killing of the lamb and ordained that its flesh should be eaten, He took Israel, as it were, to his own table and communed with them. Oh, how God's grace can save and condescend to men! No wonder, that Israel now reckoned its months from this month (12:2) and on the 14th day of the first month of each year (12:6) slaughtered its lamb and celebrated its passover (12:24—27) to commemorate this gracious deliverance through God. With indelible characters the thought was to be written in its mind, that only by means of **sacrifice** ordained of God himself can there be a deliverance of sinful men from the wrath of God, and only when sins of men are expiated through this sacrificial blood, i. e., covered up before God, can there be a joyous and blessed communion with God. This annual paschal lamb and its sacrifice was to be a **prototype of the promised Savior**, Jesus Christ, who as the real sacrificial lamb died for us (John 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:7), covered up our sins with his blood, and protected us from the wrath of a just God (1 John 2:2; 1:7), so that for his sake we might have peace with God through faith (Col. 1:20). And the paschal meal was to be a **prototype of the Lord's Supper**, in which Christ Himself gives us His sacrificial flesh and blood, so that we might be assured, our sins, too, are covered up, and we, too, are saved from divine wrath and stand in communion with Him.

And since the firstborn of Egypt were slain, but the firstborn of Israel were graciously saved, Israel's firstborn from now should be consecrated to God (Ex. 13:1—16). All firstborn among clean beasts should also be sacrificed to God and firstborn sons should serve Him as priests. And when later on the special service at the sanctuary of God devolved upon the tribe of Levi (Ex. 28:1—4; 8:1—9) all firstborn were to be freed from such service through a special offering (Ex. 13:15; Lev. 12:6; Luke 2:22—24).

Questions:—1. Into how many parts is the book of Exodus divided?—2. What does the first, the second, the third, and the fourth part treat of?—3. How many sections do we find in the first part?—4. What does the first section relate?—5. What does the second one relate?—6. What is the heading of the third section?—7. How far does it extend?—8. What was to be made manifest in this struggle?—9. What does it mean, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh?—10. What did God bring over Pharaoh through Moses in order to show him His power and make him relent?—11. Tell what the first nine plagues or judgments consisted of?—12. As what only do many regard these plagues?—13. How much truth is in their opinion?—14. What clearly demonstrates, however, that we are here dealing with miracles, with a special interference of God?—15. How many stages of intensity did God employ in the plagues in order to make them more impressive?—16. Describe the first, the second and the third stage!—17. In what way does the relation of the plagues to the Egyptian magicians also prove a progression in the plagues?—18. How do you account for it that the magicians were able to repeat two miracles?—19. What was Pharaoh's attitude toward all these miraculous plagues?—20. At which plague did he consent to let Israel sacrifice to God either in the land or not far from it?—21. When did he expressly declare that he had done wrong?—22. What was he even willing to promise now?—23. When, however, did he forbid Moses ever to appear before him again?—24. From the fifth plague on, how did God punish Pharaoh for hardening his heart?—25. When only does hardening of heart through the ministration of God take place?—26. What does it mean, God hardened Pharaoh's heart?—27. By what did God at last propose to break the obstinacy of Pharaoh?—28. What did Pharaoh now do when the firstborn in all Egypt were killed?—29. What even were the Egyptians willing to do upon request of the Israelites?—30. Why was it right in a way when the Israelites demanded gold, silver and other precious things from the Egyptians?—31. When God now had conquered in the struggle with Pharaoh, what was the result for Israel?—32. Demonstrate how the deliverance from Egypt was at the same time a test of faith for Israel?—33. What was to be made manifest by the command to mark their doors with blood?

—34. What was Israel to be taught by the sign language of the paschal lamb?—35. As a matter of fact, what had Israel merited?—36. What, according to God's will, was to become of Israel's sin through the blood of the sacrificial lamb?—37. Why was it that the blood of the lamb could serve to cover Israel's sin?—38. What could Israel now peacefully do since their sins were covered through the blood of the lamb?—39. What outward proof did Israel give that a new era had begun with this pass-over?—40. What thought was to be indelibly imprinted on their mind through the annual observance of the paschal meal and sacrifice?—41. In what way is the annual sacrifice of the paschal lamb a type of Christ?—42. Where do John and Paul testify that Jesus is the true paschal lamb whose blood covers our sins and restores peace with God?—43. And of what is the paschal meal a type?—44. In what respect is it a type of the Lord's Supper?—45. To whom should all firstborn in Israel be consecrated from henceforth?—46. What laws in Israel can be traced to this incident?—47. Who later on took the place of the firstborn in the service of God?—48. What regulation was constantly to remind Israel that the firstborn really belonged to the Lord for His service?—49. What, therefore, was done for the Christ-child when He was six weeks old?

d. God leads Israel through the Red Sea and destroys Pharaoh with all his host (Ex. 13: 17—15: 21). Read the entire section.

The exodus of Israel from Egypt marks the birth hour of the people of the twelve tribes. With this deliverance from Egypt and its bondage the life of Israel as a free and independent people began. 430 years were spent in Egypt (Ex. 12: 40) and during this period Israel grew from 70 male descendants of Jacob (Gen. 46: 27) to 600,000 men (Ex. 12: 37). Altogether the people may have been some 2,500,000 strong. Ramses or Ram-e-ses was the meeting place for the 12 tribes (12: 37). Here they entered upon their migration. And Moses did not forget to take the remains of Joseph (13: 19) as they left. The Lord Himself went before them in a pillar of cloud and fire and pointed the way (Ex. 13: 21, 22). This was a low-hanging, widely visible cloud, which gave shade in the day time and illuminated the way at night, so that Israel could travel by day or night in spite of the hot climate—of course, with the necessary stops for rest and recreation (13: 21, 22). But God did not lead them by the nearest and most direct route through the land of the Philistines to Canaan where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had lived. This would have meant severe battles at once, and the people had not yet grown sufficiently strong for this (13: 17). God never puts more upon His people than they can bear (1 Cor. 10: 13). Besides He had always through Moses demanded of Pharaoh to let the people journey to the wilderness to make

sacrifice to God (Ex. 5:1; 7:16; 10:8—11). And here in the wilderness the people were to be trained and were to receive the law. Thus He led them from Ram-e-ses to Succoth, and from there to Etham, always in the direction of the wilderness (13:20). But suddenly He caused them to halt on the journey to the wilderness, and turn back to the south, so that they again found themselves in the midst of Egypt and camped at the western shore of the Red sea, which in those days stretched out much farther towards the northwest to the Mediterranean Sea than it does today (Ex. 14:1, 2). God did this in order that the wicked heart of Pharaoh would become still more evident and he would find his complete destruction as a punishment. He Himself would harden the heart of this selfwilled and obstinate man, which through the death of the firstborn had, indeed, been severely shaken but had not been softened, much less become repentant, and glorify Himself, i. e., prove Himself as the King of kings and God of gods through a last and terrible judgment (14:3—4). For men who obstinately turn against God must serve Him only as a means to reveal His wrath and the power of His judgment (Rom. 9:17). But this change in the itinerary also had its meaning for Israel. It was to be a test for their faith, and their deliverance at the same time a clear evidence of the unbounded power of God to help and redeem.

Israel passed the test only in part. For when Pharaoh pursued them, and it came to pass that they suddenly found themselves shut in by mountains on both sides, with the sea before them and the Egyptians behind them, they became frightened and began to murmur against Moses (Ex. 14:11, 12). But when Moses encouraged them to trust in God's help, they did finally dare to enter upon the wondrous path formed for them by the omnipotence of God and to set out right through the sea (Ex. 14:13—22). And God's thoughts were realized in the case of Pharaoh also. When he began to pursue them, thinking in the blindness of his heart they had erred and were now forsaken of God (14:5—9), he even followed them into the sea. But here he met his fate. For during the morning watch (i. e., between 4 and 6 in the morning) he was frightened to death by the pillar of fire (14:24) and the fact that God's invisible hand took off the chariot wheels, and finally together with his army now completely demoralized was completely engulfed by the waters as they came together at the command of God, so that not one escaped (Ex. 14:23—28).

The place where the sea was crossed can no longer be ascertained with any degree of certainty. But since the Red Sea formerly, without

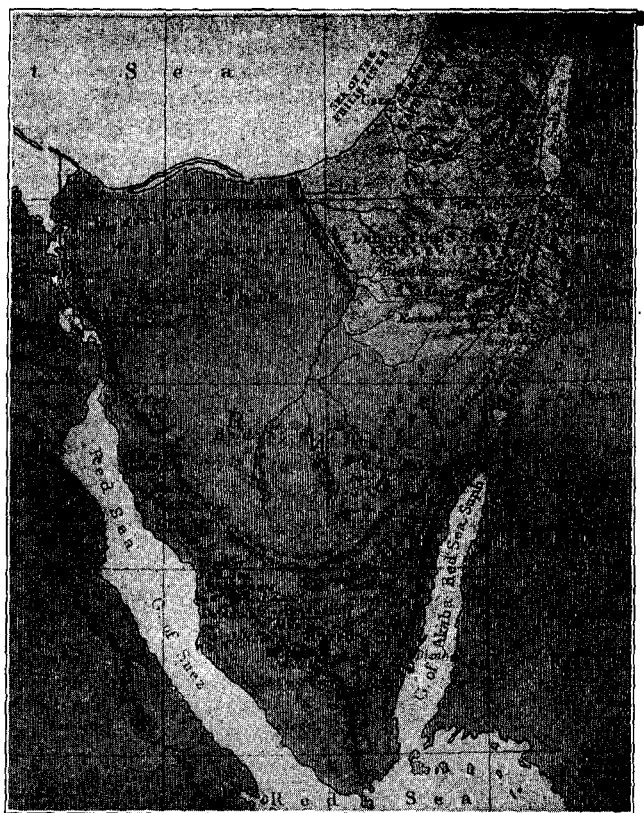
doubt, stretched out much farther to the northwest, and Pi Hahiroth (or Hiroth Ex. 14:2, 9) is likely to be present Adschrud, southeast of Suez, the crossing is likely to have taken place at some point south-east of Suez. Pharaoh here could not circumvent the arm of the sea in order to trap Israel on the other side, but must either cease in his pursuit or follow Israel through the sea. If the sea did stretch out farther to the northwest, it must also have been deeper and wider here at Suez than it is today. Thus it becomes clear, why Israel required the entire night to get from one side to the other (The procession must have been about ten miles in length, since it consisted of 2,500,000 people with all their cattle and other possessions. It is likely, therefore, that the vanguard had already reached the firm ground of the other shore before the rear guard ever stepped down into the sea). And this also explains how the entire host of Pharaoh could have been engulfed by the waters. That God hereby also used the natural phenomena of ebb and flow as He punished Pharaoh and saved Israel is well possible, but that these alone are not sufficient to account for the miraculous deliverance, is also clearly apparent. It was the **wondrous hand** of God that interfered and rescued Israel from the Egyptians. Israel regarded it as a miracle of divine omnipotence, a miracle of judgment and a miracle of grace (14:30, 31). And as such Moses and the whole people glorified it in their hymn of praise (Ex. 15:1—19). As such it lingered in the memory of the people (Ps. 78:13). As such it was looked upon as a prototype of the deliverance from the Babylonian captivity (Isaiah 63:11—15). As such this passing through the Red Sea is regarded as a prototype of the **redemption through Christ**, through whose death we were saved from the might of the infernal Pharaoh, and a prototype of **Holy Baptism**, through the water of which God has rescued us into His Kingdom (Tit. 3:5; 1 Cor. 10:3), just as for Moses already it was a pledge and an earnest for Israel's salvation from all their enemies and their entering into the land of Canaan (Ex. 15:14—18).

Questions:—1. How far does the second part of the book of Exodus extend?—2. What are we told in the first, the second, the third, and the fourth section of this part?—3. Why can it be said that the exodus from Egypt marks the birth hour of the people of Israel?—4. How long had they lived in Egypt?—5. To what numbers did they grow in this period?—6. What did they not forget to take with them when they left Egypt?—7. Where was their meeting place from which they took their journey?—8. How did God direct them on their way?—9. What are we to understand by the pillar of cloud and fire?—10. What became possible when the cloud gave shade in the day time and illu-

minated the way at night?—11. Which would have been the directest route from Egypt to Canaan?—12. Why did God not lead them that way?—13. Describe the direction in which God led them?—14. What change did He suddenly cause them to make?—15. Why did God thus lead them back to Egypt?—16. What meaning did this change have for Israel?—17. Show that they stood the test only partially!—18. Explain that encouraged by Moses' faith they did stand the test in the end!—19. Show that God's purposes in Pharaoh's case were realized!—20. Where did the crossing of the sea probably take place?—21. Why could Pharaoh not circumvent the arm of the sea and trap Israel in the desert if the crossing took place here?—22. Why did it take all night before Israel had crossed to the other shore?—23. What natural phenomenon may God have used in leading Israel through the sea?—24. What, however, proves clearly that it was more, even a miracle of God's omnipotence?—25. What shows that Moses and the people regarded their deliverance as a miracle of divine grace?—26. Of what was the passage through the Red Sea a pledge for Moses?—27. How did Israel later on regard it?—28. How can it be regarded as a type of the redemption through Christ?—29. In what respect is it also a type of baptism?

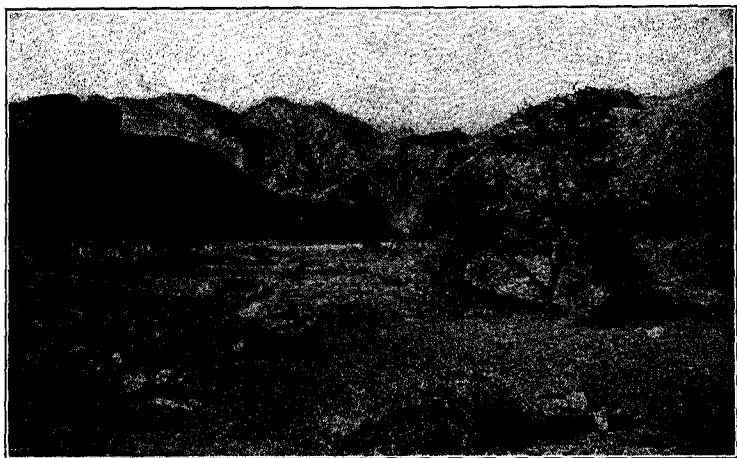
2. Israel's Journey from the Red Sea to Mt. Sinai. Exodus 11: 22—18: 27.—Read Exodus 15: 22—17: 16.

Israel was now on the **Sinaitic Peninsula** on the other side of the Red Sea. This is the name of the whole section that stretches out between the two arms of the Red Sea (the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Akaba as they are called today). This peninsula is divided into two parts. The northern part includes the Wilderness of Tih or Paran and merges up to Palestine. The southern part includes the Horeb Mountains or Sinai. It is this part that has given the peninsula its name. The wilderness of Paran approaches what we usually understand by desert. It is a "great and terrible wilderness" (Deuteronomy 1: 19), a plateau 1,000—2,000 feet above sea level, in which naked sand and limestone rocks, snowy chalk and sand deposits vary with barren, sun parched plains covered with gravel and flint. Yet during the rainy season sufficient water gathers in the lowlands and riverbeds so that passing flocks can find some grass and herbs. And there are also occasional springs and cisterns containing water even during the hot season. The southern mountainous part, however, is of quite a different nature. It is a plateau torn with many ravines and sending forth precipitous peaks rising to an altitude of approximately 8,000 feet. These mountain peaks stretch forth as cold and barren rocks, and are nowhere covered with trees or vegetation of any kind. But since the rocks are many hued (gray, reddish brown,



Peninsula of Sinai.

green, and black) the general effect, especially when tipped off or flooded with the brilliant rays of the sun, is picturesque, often gorgeous, and of rare grandeur. The peaks during the large part of the year are covered with snow. Many of the depressions and riverbeds are only filled with water during the rainy season and dry up rapidly, yet there are some that contain water all the year, so that these sections are covered with grass. And there are also large parts with rich vegetation, palms, olive and fig trees. There are acacias, and tamarisks, in the lower sections myrtle, thyme, and other aromatic



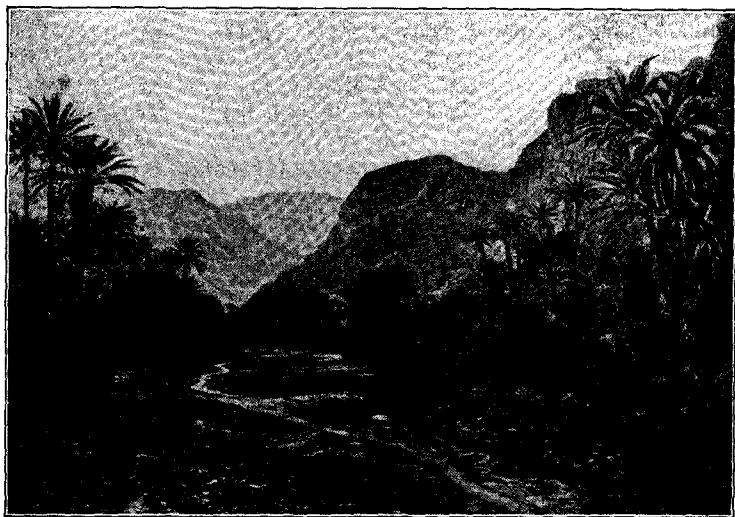
The Wilderness of Sinai.

and pungent herbs. Even in some of the most desolate spots the rose of Jericho is found. Thousands of sheep and goats find sufficient pasture during the entire year. Diligent monks, who have had a monastery on Sinai for centuries, have even planted orchards, and are raising oranges, lemons, figs, olives, almonds, apricots, peaches, apples, pears, plums, grapes, etc., and to the present day the fruit raised on Sinai commands the highest prices in the markets of Cairo, Egypt. Besides the climate of this section is extraordinarily healthy and not at all intolerably hot.

On this peninsula of Sinai the children of Israel now found themselves after they crossed the Red Sea. Now the **journey through the wilderness began**, which led them through the southeastern part of the Wilderness of Etham or Shur with Marah and Elim as stopping places. At first they followed the coast line, but at the Wilderness of Sin they turned inland and found the course of a valley which finally by way of Rephidim led them to Sinai (Ex. 15:22—16:1; 17:1; 19:1). The pillar of the cloud still preceded them and showed them the way. When they became short of food or water God Himself provided for them as a father does for his children. In the Wilderness of Shur (**Marah**) like the true physician He made the bitter water drinkable, and he refreshed them at the palm grove of **Elim**, where palm trees afforded ample shade and the well favored date, and the

springs gushed forth fresh water (Ex. 15: 22-27). In the Wilderness of **Sin** He sent them quails, so they might have meat, and manna, so that they might not suffer for want of bread (Ex. 16: 1-36). In **Rephidim** He furnished them water from the rock (17: 1-7), and during the unceasing prayer of Moses protected them against the onslaughts of the hostile Amalekites (Ex. 17: 8-16). These wondrous deeds of God followed in quick succession. Israel should ever remember, that its God is the living God, who moulds the destinies of men, and not a mere dead idol who can not intervene. And the memory of this should also strengthen them not to waver, even though God for a season should withdraw from them and give them no manifestation of His omnipotence and power to help.

Marah, Elim, Sin, and Rephidim, however, do not only mark the divine power and fidelity, but are also places standing forth as memorials to Israel's faint-heartedness and lack of faith. Even now there became evident what later proved to be Israel's besetting sin (Ex. 15: 24; 16: 2, 3; 17: 2, 3; compare Ex. 32: 9; 33: 3; 34: 9; Deut. 9: 6; 31: 27; Judges 2: 19; Neh. 9: 16; Jer. 7: 26; 17: 23; Acts 7: 51). Especially did their murmuring over the lack of meat and bread, and their hankering after the fleshpots of Egypt call forth the displeasure of God, for it



Valley of Feiran on the Peninsula of Sinai.

manifested an almost incredible ingratitude for the salvation which they experienced, and gave evidence of their doubt of the gracious omnipotence of God (16:2, 3). God, therefore, signally interfered. He manifested His glory to them in a cloud (perhaps in striking flashes of lightning), and in perceptible speech declared their murmurings against Moses and Aaron to be a murmuring against Himself (16:10—12). Israel should once for all learn, though God is gracious and merciful, He will also judge and punish. If in spite of their murmurings He provides them with meat and bread, He does not do it because He is weak and will yield to pouting, but because He is gracious and merciful and will permit such conduct under His longsuffering before He interferes with His punishment. But where God does forbear to punish and even gives beyond expectation, He demands unconditional trust and the promptest obedience (16:16—29). As God feeds them with manna, He also brings back to Israel's attention the observance of the seventh day, Sabbath (Gen. 2:2—3), which had been largely forgotten (Ex. 16:29, 30).

In these wondrous deeds, the feeding of the people with meat and bread, God accommodated Himself to the natural conditions of the Sinaitic peninsula. To the present day large flocks of **quails** coming from the interior of Africa and flying to the north in the spring of the year, pass over Sinai to return again in the fall, and oftentimes they are so exhausted that they can be caught with the hand. Besides the quail, the partridge is also indigenous and native to that section and to the present day forms an important article of food for the natives. God provided a large flock of these at this particular time which furnished the people with the necessary meat. **Manna** is also found at Sinai to the present day. It is usually found in June and July, sometimes even in May, and most often in the immediate neighborhood of Sinai. Here during the warm nights it exudes from the branches of one of the species of the tamarisk and in the form of small kernels it drops on the dry leaves, twigs, and thorns underneath the trees. It must be gathered before sunrise, for the heat of the sun immediately dissolves it. During wet years it exudes more freely and then for a period of six weeks. In some years it is not found at all. In appearance it resembles gum, and its taste is sweet similar to honey. The relation of this natural manna to the manna provided by God for His people is quite apparent (Ex. 16:13—15; 16:21; 16:31). The very fact that the latter came in such abundance and was found during the entire course of the year, moreover that Israel found it during the entire forty years whenever other food stuffs were lacking, and that it ceased

as soon as they had crossed the Jordan and entered Canaan, shows that it was due to the miraculous intervention of God (Ex. 16:35; Joshua 5:11, 12). It is quite natural therefore, that the Jews should look upon it as "bread of heaven" (Ex. 16:13, 14; John 6:31) and that Paul should call it "spiritual meat" (1 Cor. 10:3) for it was not given them except by an act of divine power. Its counterpart is found in the gift of the Lord's Supper, in which Christ by an act of divine power unites His own body and blood with the bread and wine and gives them to us as a sustenance for our journey through this life to the eternal Canaan.

The fact that the **Amalekites** (Ex. 17:8-16) suddenly attacked them at Rephidim, i. e., in the mountain sections of Sinai, is not to be wondered at, if we remember, that these desert tribes to the present day when summer begins migrate from the lowlands, where the grass is withered, to the higher mountain section of the peninsula, because, owing to the cooler climate, the pastures continue much longer. The Amalekites, too, for the same reason, no doubt, migrated from their homes in the north in the Wilderness of Paran to the Sinai sections, and here attacked the Israelites. These Amalekites were the descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:12) and thus were related to the Israelites. But instead of permitting the people of Israel to pursue their way in peace, they seem to have recognized them as the chosen people of God, in which the blessing of Isaac for Jacob was fulfilled (Gen. 27:28, 29). For that reason, it appears, they attacked the Israelites to destroy them in the very beginning of their career. Only then can we understand why the Amalekites are promised total extinction as a punishment for their hostility to the Israelites (17:14-16; 1 Sam. 15:2, 3). Thus Amalek is the first representative of the people hostile to God who attempt to stem the people of God on earth on their journey to the heavenly Canaan above. Even though the Church of God is redeemed from the power of the infernal Pharaoh through Christ, of whom Moses was the prototype, yet the powers of evil still attempt to impede its way on its journey to eternal perfection. Yet the Church is assured, as was Israel of old, that the final victory will be given to it, and not to the powers of evil in the world. But the Church of God will never gain the victory except by fervent and incessant prayer. The mere force of arms will never insure the victory, no more than Joshua's arms could vanquish the Amalekites, without the staff of Moses held up to God in fervent prayer (James 5:16).

That all the people did not attempt to stem the people of God, but that some of them recognized the hand of the living God in the

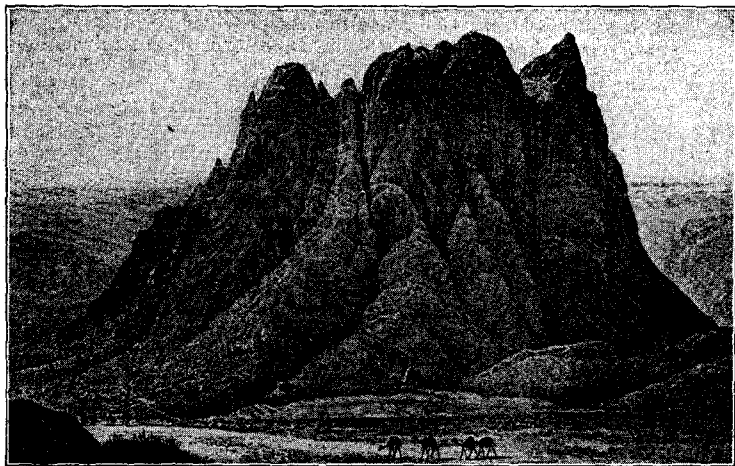
wondrous acts He did for Israel (Ex. 18:8—12), is shown by the Midianite Jethro or Reuel (Moses' father-in-law, compare Ex. 2:15—21; 3:1 and see also page 104), who came to Moses and brought him his wife and children (Moses had, perhaps, returned them from Egypt to Jethro, because in his special mission in Egypt they would have proven a hindrance rather than a help), and made sacrifice with him to the God of Israel (Ex. 18:1—12). In external matters the people of God can receive valuable suggestions even from other people, as is shown by Moses who placed judges over Israel at the suggestion of Jethro to lessen his own work (Ex. 18:13—27).

Questions:—1. Into how many parts is the book of Exodus divided?—2. What does the first part relate?—3. In what chapters do we find a record of the second part?—4. What does this part treat of?—5. In what place was Israel when they reached the other shore of the Red Sea?—6. Into how many parts is the peninsula of Sinai divided?—7. How is the northern part called?—8. What is the character of this part?—9. How is the southern part called?—10. Describe this part!—11. What can you tell me of its climate and vegetation in particular?—12. How is the march of the children of Israel which they now began generally called?—13. Describe the route the people of Israel followed!—14. Show that God was their leader!—15. Show that He was their physician!—16. Show that He was their host!—17. On what occasion did He prove to be their shield?—18. Of what part of the Catechism are you reminded when you read that God so faithfully provided for His people?—19. Why did God grant them the experience of one miraculous deed after the other while they were on their way?—20. How should Israel have responded to all these miracles of their God?—21. What on the contrary did they reveal on so many stations of their journey through the wilderness?—22. Show that lack of faith and murmuring later on became the besetting sin of Israel!—23. On what occasion did Israel's murmuring against God become especially evident?—24. How did God signally interfere?—25. What was such interference of God to teach Israel once for all?—26. What warning would God thereby give Christians?—27. What incident in connection with the feeding with manna teaches that He demands unconditional trust and promptest obedience of the recipients of His gifts?—28. What ancient ordinance did God recall to their memory at this time?—29. When already had the seventh day been instituted as a day of rest?—30. In what respect did God accommodate Himself to the natural condition of the Sinaitic peninsula when He fed them with quails?—31. What does it prove, however, that the flocks of quails came at this particular time and in such numbers?—32. In like manner, how may God have accommodated Himself to conditions prevailing on the peninsula when He provided the manna?—33. What again proves that it was

at the same time a miraculous intervention of God?—34. What did Israel mean to imply when they called it “bread of heaven?”—35. Why does Paul call it “spiritual food” in 1 Cor. 10:3?—36. In what respect can the manna be called a type of the Lord’s Supper?—37. What made it possible that the Amalekites could attack Israel in the midst of the wilderness?—38. How are the Amalekites related to the Israelites?—39. What may have been the reason why the Amalekites attacked the Israelites?—40. What judgment does that help you to understand better?—41. What then are we to recognize in the attack of the Amalekites?—42. How does the termination of the battle between the Amalekites and the Israelites typify the final issue of the struggle between the kingdoms of the world and the church of God?—43. What will be necessary for the victory of the church over the enemies if the struggle of the Amalekites and Israelites is the type?—44. What incident of that time shows that not all nations will antagonize the church of God on its way to the heavenly Canaan?—45. In what respect did Jethro suggest a valuable decrease of Moses’ labors?

3. The Covenant at Mount Sinai. Ex. 19: 1—24: 18.—Read Ex. 19: 1—25; 20: 1—24; 24: 1—18.

During the third month after the exodus from Egypt, Israel came to the Wilderness of Sinai and camped opposite the mountain, on which God appeared to Moses and where they should serve God (Lev.



Mt. Ras-Safsafah and the Plain of Er-Raha.

19:1, 2; 3:12). The Sinai Mountains are divided into three groups or ranges, named after especially lofty peaks, the Serbal, Musa, and Um Shome group. In the southern end of the middle group (Sinai in the restricted sense) there rises Mt. Musa, 6,700 feet high, and in the northern the almost perpendicular rock, like a mighty wall 6,000 feet high, Mt. Ras-Safsafah (Horeb in the restricted sense). Both peaks look out over a lofty plateau. The northern of the two, opposite Ras-Safsafah, is the plain of Er-Raha. It is like a giant amphitheatre or auditorium enclosed on all sides by hills, and is sufficiently large for a numerous people to camp. This plain is therefore usually regarded as the place of the encampment of Israel, and the Safsafah is looked upon as the mountain where the law was given. Reaching this mountain, Moses ascended to God (Ex. 19:3), i. e., to the summit of the mountain, to which in all probability the pillar of the cloud had retreated.

Before Moses reached the summit God called to him from above (19:4) and gave him the necessary instructions in order to **prepare** for the **making of the covenant** with Israel, that is to say, the establishment of a special relation between God and Israel (19:4—15). Three facts were involved: 1. The Lord reminds Moses of the gracious act of God in the past, namely when God rescued the people from the bondage of Egypt, and since then led it as carefully as the eagle his young, who hovers below when they make their first attempts to fly, so that he will catch them with his wings if they fall (19:4). 2. The Lord holds up to Moses the wonderful thing He will do with Israel in the future. He will enter into a relation with Israel such as is not known of any other nation of the earth. Though the whole world and all nations are God's possession, since He has created and preserved them, yet He will choose Israel from the midst of them all, make it His precious **treasure** above them all, enter into the closest union with it, and give it a special work to perform. It should be His **kingdom**, He will be the King, will reign and rule it, and through it will carry out His will on earth. It should consist of a people of **priests**, so that all its members may approach Him and speak with Him in prayer. It should be a **holy people**, separated by God Himself from all uncleanness and especially consecrated to Him. Oh, what a glorious future God here holds up to the eye of Israel! And again He takes up every promise given in former times (Gen. 3:15; 9:26, 27; 12:1—3; 49:10) and applies them to Israel. Israel should be the blessed people through which the blessing is brought to all peoples, the first-born among the sons of God (i. e., among the nations) Ex.

4:22; Deut. 32:6, 8—12, the light and bearer of salvation to the heathen, Isaiah 42:6. What is said of Christians (1 Peter 2:9) and what will find its full consummation when eternity dawns (Rev. 21:3)—all of this God's grace promises to Israel. 3. And now on the basis of this gracious promise—for God never demands before He has given—God orders to sanctify the people for the coming revelation and covenant (Ex. 19:10—15). Even though this was only an external consecration, yet it must have become deeply impressed on the thought of the people that God is a holy God, and no unclean one can stand in His sight (Lev. 19:2; Ps. 5:4). And it was this thought of the holiness of God and His awful majesty, which God would awaken in His people and imprint with indelible characters on their minds when He introduced His revelation with the awful signs (Ex. 19:16—19), and ever again admonished Moses not to come upon the mountain nor even to touch it (Ex. 19:21—25). God here shows Himself according to the two sides of His being: He is the gracious God who thinks only of one thing, the salvation of men; He is the holy and mighty God, who can and will also destroy them who resolutely oppose His gracious purpose and insist on remaining in sin. Since God knows that Israel is an obstinate and stubborn people (Ex. 32:9; 33:3; 34:9; Deut. 9:6; Acts 7:51) He emphasizes this latter phase of His being. If grateful love will not keep them from sinning, then perhaps the fear of punishment will do it.

After such preparation there follows the revelation. God Himself speaks from the top of the mountain to the assembled people and gives them the **Ten Words** (Ex. 20:1—17). Here, too, He begins with the gospel, the glad tidings of His grace, before He prescribes His law. For He calls Himself Jehovah (Lord), i. e., the One who can at any time interfere for the salvation of Israel, and impressively reminds them of their redemption from Egypt, whereby He showed Himself the interfering, living God, the God of grace and salvation. Should not such a God demand that He only be accepted as the true God (verse 3), that He who is Spirit in His essence (John 4:24) be not worshipped by any graven image or picture (verses 4 and 5), that His name, the precious Jehovah name, be not taken in vain (verse 7), that His day be sanctified (verses 8—11), and that His representatives on earth be honored and esteemed (verse 12)? Should He not demand that for His sake we take the proper attitude to the neighbor, respect the neighbor's life, marriage, property, good name, in word and deed, and not even in thought covet those things that are the neighbor's (verses 13—17)? Israel must be a remarkably ungrateful people if it

will not recognize and obey these demands of God as just and meet! And God here also especially emphasizes them, by promising blessings to him who fulfills them, and wrath and punishment to him who transgresses them (verses 5 and 6), and by accompanying His words with lightning, the sound of trumpets, and the smoking mountain (verse 18). If the people fled in fear from this revelation of God, when He spoke directly to them and accompanied His words with these awful signs, it shows that a two-fold purpose was accomplished: 1. they became conscious of the fact that God is terribly serious about His commandments, for this reason it is best to fear Him and not do contrary to His will (verse 20); 2. they became conscious of the fact that they needed a mediator who would speak with God. Moses had acted in *this capacity before, and from this time on he did so more than ever*, for all subsequent laws God did not give to Israel directly, but used Moses as His speaker. Thus Moses became the mediator between God and the people (verses 21 and 22), who brought to Israel what God had given him for them (verses 21 and 22; Gal. 2:19).—Ex. 20: 22-26 and Ex. 21-23 we find such laws recorded which God gave to Moses for Israel. They are special applications of this or that of the ten commandments, as they were needed for Israel, and as Moses later on compiled them in a book for constant obedience (Ex 24:4).

But Moses was also to be the mediator between God and the people in another way. Through his mediation the **making of the covenant** between God and the people, which God had promised to Moses (Ex. 19:5, 6), should be accomplished (Ex. 24:5-8). After God for His part had given His law, the people for their part should declare their willingness to live up to it. That God would demand such a declaration of the people, He had said at the beginning (24:3). Then the covenant itself was made. Moses erected an altar at the foot of the mountain and placed twelve columns about it. The altar was the place of the gracious presence of God (Ex. 20:24); the twelve columns symbolized the twelve tribes of Israel. A special relation between God and Israel was about to be perfected. The young men brought an animal for sacrifice, the innocent blood of which was shed. Moses took one-half of the blood and sprinkled it against the altar. This was to propitiate for Israel's sin, i. e., cover it up before God. Then he sprinkled the other half on the people, who had previously promised to keep God's commandments, in order to show that they participated in the propitiation. That which separates man from God, namely sin, was regarded as wiped out. A union was established, God had condescended in His grace and had entered into a special relation

with Israel, with Moses as the mediator. God had in His mercy united Himself with Israel above all other nations of the world. What had been promised, Exodus 19:5 and 6, was now beginning to be realized. What God had once done with Noah (Gen. 9:9) and later with Abraham (Gen. 17:7), He now did with the whole people. They were now an elect people, a people of the covenant, on earth. It must not be overlooked that the covenant was not made without the shedding of blood. God Himself must first provide a sacrificial blood, and Moses sprinkle it against the altar, the place of God's gracious presence, before God could enter into the new relation with Israel. That was a prophecy of the fact, that in the New Testament also there can be no covenant, no union and communion with God, without the shedding of innocent and sacrificial blood. And Jesus calls His blood the "blood of the New Testament" (Matth. 26:28).

As a symbol of the fact that God has entered into the union with the people of Israel, the elders, as the representatives of the people, are permitted to **see God**, as far as that is possible for mortal beings, and eat the **covenant meal** (Ex. 24:9-11). At the same time it was an earnest and a pledge of the blessedness and glory to which God will finally take His people. The final and complete fulfillment is the wedding feast of the Lamb, when the perfected people of God will rejoice in its perfect union with God throughout eternity (Rev. 19:7-9).—Finally Moses is called into the presence of the Lord to receive the tables on which God Himself had written the **Law of the Covenant**. For upon the fulfillment of this law will depend whether God can carry out His thoughts of grace and salvation for Israel (Ex. 19:5; 24:7, 8).

Questions:—1. What does the first part of the book of Exodus relate?—2. What the second part?—3. How far does the third part extend?—4. What is the contents of it?—5. When did Israel arrive at Mt. Sinai?—6. Describe the Sinai Mountains!—7. Which peak in this mountain range is usually regarded as the mountain from which the law was given?—8. In what plain may the people of Israel have encamped?—9. What does it mean, And Moses went up unto God?—10. What was to be established here between God and Israel?—11. What does that mean, A covenant was to be established between God and man?—12. How many facts were involved in the preparation for the making of the covenant?—13. Name the first one!—14. Name the second one!—15. What did God promise to make of Israel above all other nations?—16. What does it mean, Israel should be made His precious treasure?—17. What does it mean, Israel should be His kingdom?—18. What does it mean, It should consist of a people of priests?—19. What does it mean,

It should be a holy people?—20. What does it mean, Israel should be the firstborn among the sons of God?—21. What promises given in former times does God again take up in giving this great promise?—22. Through whom did Israel later on really become the light and the bearer of salvation to the heathen?—23. Upon whom was the promise fulfilled according to 1 Pet. 2:9?—24. When will this promise find its full consummation according to Rev. 21:3?—25. What third fact was involved in the preparation for the making of the covenant?—26. What did this external sanctification signify?—27. By what signs was the thought of the holiness of God and His awful majesty to be indelibly imprinted on their minds?—28. According to what two sides of His being does God show Himself here?—29. Which one of the two did God emphasize?—30. What was the necessity of such emphasis?—31. In what chapter of Exodus is the revelation of God itself recorded?—32. What did this revelation consist of in the first place?—33. What does God, even in the Ten Words begin with before He prescribes His law?—34. In what words is the gospel contained?—35. What could God who had proved Himself to be the savior of His people justly expect regarding Himself?—36. And what in regard to the neighbor?—37. How did God in the Ten Words give special emphasis to His demands?—38. What effect did it have on the people when He spoke His words accompanied with lightning, the sound of trumpets and smoke?—39. What two-fold purpose was accomplished none the less?—40. How did Moses intervene as mediator between God and the people?—41. In what chapters for instance do we find laws given by God through Moses to the people?—42. What did Moses later on do with all these laws?—43. In what other way was Moses also to be mediator between God and the people?—44. What was the first step in the making of the covenant proper?—45. Why was Moses told to build an altar?—46. Why was he to place twelve columns around it?—47. Thus God and the people between whom the covenant was to be made were represented; for what purpose was the blood of the sacrificial lamb to be used?—48. Why did Moses sprinkle one-half of it against the altar?—49. Why the other half on the people?—50. What had been removed as soon as sin was propitiated, or covered up before God?—51. What took the place of the separation between God and Israel?—52. Since God had now established a union between Him and Israel, He now stood in the same relation to the whole people as He formerly did to what individuals?—53. When had God promised Israel what was now fully realized?—54. What divine principle found expression in the fact that the covenant was not made without shedding of blood?—55. What other shedding of blood was typified by this one?—56. Where does Jesus call His blood the blood of the New Testament?—57. In what way did God assure the elders of the people of Israel that union between God and Israel had been established?—58. Whereof was the meal they ate on this occasion

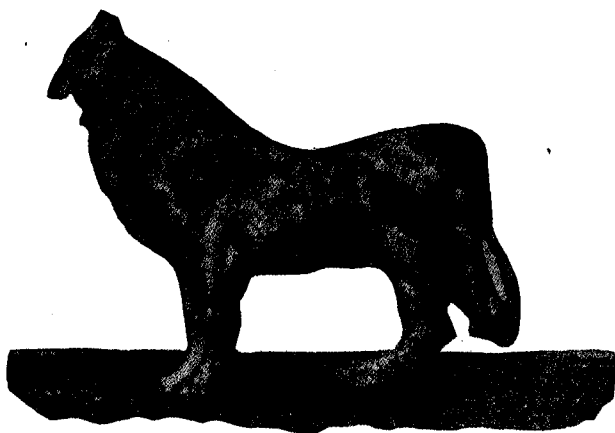
a pledge?—59. For what purpose was Moses once more called into God's presence?—60. How is the law called that God wrote on the tables and gave to Moses?—61. What was to depend on obedience to this law of the covenant?

4. **The Indwelling of God in Israel.** Ex. 25: 1—40: 38.—Read Ex. 32: 1—35; 33: 1—23; 34: 29—35; 40: 18—38.

Not only on the mountain and at certain times, and not only to Moses and several others of the elect will God condescend (Ex. 24: 9—11), but He will condescend still more and have a sanctuary in the midst of the people, and dwell among them (Ex. 25: 8). God therefore commands Moses: 1. To call upon the people for voluntary gifts for the construction of the sanctuary (Ex. 25: 1—8). Israel was far from being poor. It had lived in the richest part of Egypt, and even though since the beginning of the years of bondage it had lost much of its wealth, yet at the same time its many large flocks indicate, that at the time of the exodus it was far from being poverty stricken. Besides the possession of jewels and gold and silver ornaments and precious silks (verses 3 and 4) has ever played a great role in the Orient. Compare also Ex. 25: 35, 36.—2. God ordered Moses to have the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25: 10—22), the table for the shewbread and the golden candelstick (Ex. 25: 23—40) constructed.—3. To erect a tent, the tabernacle, consisting of two parts, the Most Holy Place and the Holy Place, in which the ark of the covenant, the table for the shewbread, and the golden candlestick are placed (Ex. 26: 1—37).—4. To make a court around the tabernacle proper and put in the altar for burnt offering (Ex. 27: 1—19).—5. To secure the consecrated oil (27: 20—21).—6. To prepare the sacerdotal vestments for the Highpriest Aaron and his sons, the priests, and consecrate the priests for their office [a part of which was the anointing of their heads, 29: 7] (Ex. 28: 1—29: 37).—7. To arrange for the daily service at the altar for burnt offering (Ex. 29: 38—41).—8. To erect an altar for incense and determine its service (Ex. 30: 1—10).—9. To order whatever besides pertained to worship (Ex. 30: 11—38); and even engage the builder of the entire sanctuary (Bezaleel) with his assistants (Ex. 31: 1—11). God Himself will dwell in this sanctuary and in its services as ordained by Him, will prove Himself to them as their God, and will rule and lead them as His chosen people (Gen. 17: 7; Ex. 19: 5—6), as is expressly stated Ex. 29: 45—46.

But while God was thus arranging everything with Moses on the mountain for His gracious dwelling in Israel's midst, the people themselves grievously fell by worshipping the golden calf and jeopardizing

the grace intended for them (Ex. 32:1—6). The people had not seen Moses, through whom God spoke and dealt with them, for so long a time (Ex. 24:18) and thought that God, too, had departed from them. And since in a purely natural and heathen way they chose to see and touch rather than believe (Hebr. 11, 1), they demanded a visible substitute for God and Moses. The worship of a calf or rather a steer was well known to them from their sojourn in Egypt. Hence they demanded something similar, something made by hand (32:1), to which they could cling. Aaron lacked the courage to deny them their demand. He rather demanded the most precious possessions which they had, their golden ornaments in order to construct an artificial steer.



A Small Golden Bull Found in Moab.

He may have reasoned, they will not care to sacrifice this, and the whole matter is likely to go by default. But Aaron erred, for the people furnished everything as demanded. Then Aaron unfortunately took the second step, he chiselled a model and made the molten calf. And when the people, referring to the golden steer, now exclaimed, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt! he noticed the impending danger, namely that they would leave the living God, with whom they had just made the covenant, altogether, and drop entirely into idolatry. He tried, therefore, to give the whole affair another turn by proclaiming, Tomorrow is a feast of the Lord! He hoped thereby to impress it on the mind of the people with indelible characters, that the molten calf or steer must

only be regarded as a graven image of the God of the covenant, but can never take the place of, nor be worshipped as God. It must only be a visible representation of the invisible God. But even this combination of the invisible and living God with the visible and inanimate image was a sin and expressly prohibited in the Ten Words (Ex. 20: 4, 5). Such worship, even though only symbolical, always leads to manifest idolatry. And the people did celebrate the proclaimed feast in the same manner as heathen always observed their feasts; namely with feasting, song, and dance (verse 6).

The Lord who sees all things was not ignorant of Israel's defection. He informed Moses of it even when he was still on the mountain, and also of His intention to destroy Israel as a punishment for its defection, and make him, namely Moses, a great people in its stead (32:7—9). It was to be a test for Moses. It was to make manifest whether Moses would forget his people in order himself to become the ancestor of a new people or not. Moses stood the test. He thought only of his people, not of himself. In his love for his people he became the **mediator** in another way: he interceded with God for the people. He did not deny Israel's guilt, but he earnestly pleaded with God, for His honor's and truthfulness' sake to be merciful (32:10—13). Thus Moses became the prototype for the true mediator Jesus Christ, who makes intercession for us at the right hand of the Father, does not deny our guilt, but for His own suffering's and death's sake pleads for mercy and forgiveness (Rom. 8:33, 34; 1 John 2:1). And pursuant to Moses' intercession God recalled His threat (He "repented," i. e., He pitied the people and changed His intention, verse 14). Still the matter could not pass without a **punishment**. That would only have fortified the people in their obstinacy and led them to even greater levity. And Moses, here again as the mediator and representative of God, executed the punishment after his descent from the mountain. In sacred anger he cast the tables of the law (verses 14—16), made and written by God Himself, to the ground, and shattered them, in order to show that Israel had violated the covenant with God. And in order to show them the nullity of what they had worshipped, he gave them the water to drink into which he had put the image of the steer now ground to powder. He also caused the tribe of Levi to slay 3000 of the recreants, who as a result of fear of Moses or consciousness of guilt did not defend themselves. It was a terrible punishment, but it was all the more necessary since the covenant with God had just been concluded under divine condescension, the Ten Commandments had only shortly before been given by God

Himself from the mountain, and the whole affair was really only an expression of the idolatrous inclinations of the people. And God well knew how deep-rooted it was. A punishment of just such nature was necessary to leave no doubt of God's attitude towards idolatry. And since the tribe of Levi stood with Moses, and in contradistinction to the other tribes, here emphatically declared for God (verse 26), and also permitted no sympathy for its fellow citizens to hinder it in executing the well merited punishment, this also in a way changed the curse resting on it because of the fleshly zeal of its ancestor (Gen. 49: 5—7; 34: 25) to a blessing (verse 29), so that God elected it for His special service in the sanctuary (Lev. 3 and 4; compare Deut. 33: 9, 10).

God had, indeed, recalled His intention to destroy the people because of Moses' intercession (32: 9—14), but Moses well knew that the sin of the people had not yet been forgiven. Even the judgment visited upon them by Moses had not propitiated the sin. Moses therefore again approached the Lord for his people to obtain **forgiveness** for them (32: 30—35). In his wonderful love for his people he ventured the daring word (verse 32), if God would not forgive Israel then He might blot him, too, from His gracious presence.* In His righteousness, according to which God punishes the sinner, God indeed, rejects the daring word of Moses, but in His love He at least promises him to defer judgment over Israel for an indefinite time. He also promises him an angel who will guide the people to Canaan (Ex. 32: 30—35). When Moses informed the people of this answer of God (33: 1—3), they well knew, that this time the angel who would precede them would not be Jahve's own presence as in Ex. 23: 20—22, but is clearly distinguished from it, even put in opposition to it (compare 33: 2, "And I will send an angel before thee," and 33: 3, "For I will not go up in the midst of thee"), and this caused them sincere sorrow (verse 4). **They felt, that they had violated their covenant relation with God.** And in order to make them even more vividly conscious of this fact, Moses took his tent and pitched it outside of the camp. And since the cloud of the Lord descended upon this tent,

* In employing the term, to blot from the book of God, Moses accommodated himself to human conditions. As lists of the citizens are kept in a human commonwealth, all of them recorded in books, Moses would say, God also carries records in which the names of the heavenly citizens are written. There is such a book, though not made of paper nor written with ink. It is nothing less than God's memory. God has the names of His own written in His memory. Compare Ps. 69: 28; Luke 10: 20; Phil. 4: 3; Rev. 3: 5; 13: 8; 17: 8.

and, although it must not be confounded with the tabernacle erected at a later date, marked it as the place of the gracious presence of the Lord, the people must become cognizant of a two-fold fact: 1. that God would not dwell in their midst because of their sin; and 2. that He had not entirely withdrawn from them. God would thereby awaken sorrow in Israel over its violation of the covenant and at the same time a yearning for its re-establishment (Ex. 33:7—11). And Moses gained his point, for many of the people went out to the tent in order to counsel with the Lord (verse 7), and God did renew the covenant at a later time.

This re-establishment of the covenant, however, did not materialize until Moses again, with rare courage of faith, **interceded** for the people (33:12—17). He reminded God of the fact that "He knew him by name," i. e., expressly chose him as His own and appointed him the leader of the people (verse 12), and that He also made Israel His people (verse 13). What was the value of all this unless He would precede and Himself go with them? Moses thus did, what the psalmist says, Ps. 27:8, and wrestled with God as Jacob had done (Gen 32:24—26), not only for his own sake but like a true mediator for his people. And behold, with his faithful wrestling he penetrated to the very heart of God and received the gracious answer from God's wonderful love, Not any angel but I myself ("My presence," verse 14) will go with thee and the people to the land where there shall be rest. This answer of God **again established the covenant.**

Questions:—1. What does the first, the second, the third part of the book of Exodus treat of?—2. How far does the fourth part extend?—3. What is its contents?—4. With what gracious condescension toward Israel did God not content Himself?—5. What on the contrary did He desire?—6. How many separate commands did God give Moses that a sanctuary might be established in their midst in which He could dwell?—7. Enumerate the nine commands!—8. While God was giving the instructions for building the sanctuary in which He could dwell among the people, what did the people do?—9. How was it possible that the people could express a desire for the golden calf?—10. Whom was the visible golden calf to replace?—11. Whom did the people not wish to forsake by their desire for the golden calf?—12. What led Israel to think of a golden calf as a substitute for the invisible God and His prophet Moses?—13. How did Aaron hope to be able to divert them from their purpose?—14. When he found that he erred what did Aaron unfortunately do?—15. When did he notice that he had done wrong and that his act might result in total defection from God?—16. What did he do to give the whole affair another turn?—17. Though Aaron would have succeeded in turning the people from gross idolatry, what sin

would none the less have been committed?—18. By what can you tell that many of the people approached to heathen idolatry?—19. What was God now ready to do with the apostate people?—20. In what respect was this a test for Moses?—21. How did Moses stand the test?—22. In what sense now was he a mediator for Israel?—23. Whom does Moses here typify?—24. Where in the New Testament are we told that Jesus Christ pleads and makes intercession for us before the Father?—25. What was the result of Moses' pleading?—26. What does it mean, The Lord repented?—27. Why could the matter not pass without punishment?—28. Recite how Moses executed the punishment!—29. What did he want to show the people by casting the tables on the ground and breaking them?—30. Why did he put the image ground to powder into the water they drank?—31. What tribe did he select to avenge God's honor?—32. What position must the tribe of Levi have taken?—33. In what way did God later on reward them for their faithfulness?—34. Why was such a severe punishment of the people necessary?—35. What had Moses so far gained by his intercession?—36. What, however, had Israel not obtained until now?—37. What did Moses therefore again do for the people?—38. What did Moses mean to say when he daringly prayed, Blot me out of Thy book?—39. Explain the origin of the phrase, To inscribe in the book of life; To blot out of the book of life!—40. What was the result of Moses' daring appeal?—41. What did the people learn from the answer of God that He would not Himself lead them to Canaan but would send His angel before them?—42. What did Moses do now, in order to make them even more vividly conscious of this fact?—43. What inference could they draw from the fact that the cloud descended on Moses' tent, even though it were outside of the camp?—44. From what can you tell that the people repented and nourished the hope that God would again return to them?—45. What did Moses now repeat to obtain God's forgiveness and the renewal of the covenant?—46. What did Moses now urge in his pleadings with God?—47. And what answer did he actually receive?—48. What had thereby been re-established?—49. What had Moses again proved to be?—50. And what must God be when He can so forgive sins and renew the covenant?

But this only served to make Moses more courageous and impetuous. And as an indubitable earnest for the renewed covenant and an unmistakable sign of God's presence and a confirmation of himself as the leader of Israel for all times, he made even greater demand, he asked to see **God's glory**. Since God had condescended to him and not only spoke to him out of the cloud as He had done to the people, but "face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend" (33: 11), this could only mean, that Moses desired to see God's own eternal and invisible essence without any veil. For him, a sinful and mortal being, that was a petition of dangerous presumption, and it would have been only

natural if God had emphatically denied him the prayer and put him back within the limits due to a man and sinner. But no, in adorable condescension God did not simply reject the prayer. Indeed, He emphatically gives him to understand, that he has in nowise deserved the favor, that this can only be a matter of divine grace and mercy, for He gives and denies as He sees fit (33:19), but He promises to show him as much of His glory as a mortal man can bear. If He were to show him the whole of His divine nature without the veil Moses would have to perish (verse 23). As our natural eye is blinded by the brightness of the sun and its power to see is destroyed, thus also the unveiled seeing of the sun of divine glory would annihilate our whole earthly being. But God will show him His **goodness and mercy** (verse 19). He will pass by before Moses so that he might see Him from the back (verse 23). Thus he will see only God's grace and goodness, and this mortal man may behold. But before Moses can behold the promised revelation of divine glory he must first at God's command hew two stone tables and bring them to the mountain, so that God might inscribe the same words written on the first tables, which Moses had shattered. For after the covenant had been renewed the tables with the law of the covenant must also be renewed (Ex. 34:1-4). And while Moses ascended the mountain with the tables of the law, God appeared to him, as He had promised, and passed by him with a glory so that Moses could look after Him (Ex. 34:5-7). We are not told what Moses saw, for human language could never describe it, but we are told what he heard. Jahve Himself in passing by proclaimed His name and essence, and said, "**The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation!**" God thereby describes His own inner nature as love, and says nothing less of Himself than what John says 1 John 4:8. For mercy, grace, longsuffering, goodness and faithfulness (or truth) are only the phases of His love for man, the sinner. And that men in their thoughts may not become careless of His love, He describes it as **holy love**, which also punishes the sinner and excludes him from His fellowship. But it is not this which God stresses, but the former. For He not only speaks of the fact that He will preserve His grace for a thousand generations, where He punishes sin only to the third and fourth generation, but also in contradistinction to Ex. 20:5, 6, He puts His saving

love at the head, and describes it as fully as human tongue will permit. Moses should know that his God can also punish, but he should also know that He will much, much rather save, forgive, and bless. This is the very acme of the revelation of the divine nature in the Old Testament, and the New Testament merely adds its yea and amen to it. No wonder, that Moses bowed to the ground and worshipped, when the Lord passed by before him and spoke these words (verse 8).

In answer to Moses' prayer God repeats His promise to be in the midst of Israel and Himself to lead them to Canaan (33:14), and thus in a formal and unmistakable way renews the covenant relation (Ex. 34:9—10). The law of the covenant is also written on the tables which Moses had taken with him to the mountain, and a number of other laws given (Ex. 34, 11—27), foremost among which is a warning against idolatry and every intermingling with heathen (verses 12—17). This time also Moses remained with the Lord for forty days to test Israel and see whether it would defect from the Lord or remain faithful. As a result of the fact that Moses had seen the glory of God, as far as any mortal man can see, there remained a lustre on his face of which he himself knew nothing. This was to be the sign of the fact that he really communed with God and was His confidant. All the more should Israel refrain from murmuring against him or doubting his office. But since Aaron and the people, as a result of this fact, feared him, he wore a veil before his face whenever he was with them (Ex. 34:28—35). This is what Paul has in mind when he says that the office of the New Testament has an even greater glory than the office of Moses (2 Cor. 3:7—11).

Soon after Moses had descended from the mountain and had communicated to the people the commandments of God, he had the people bring him the material necessary for the building of the tabernacle (Ex. 35:5 ff., 35:20 ff.). After the covenant with God had been renewed and God had again promised to dwell in their midst, the erection of the tabernacle could be undertaken, as commanded in chapters 25—31, but deferred on account of the defection of Israel. Chapters 36—39 tell of the building which Bezaleel and Aholiab constructed under Moses' direction. When the building was completed the cloud immediately filled both apartments of the tent (the Holy and the Most Holy) as a sign that God indeed dwells in the midst of His people (Ex. 40:34—38). Later it retreated to the Most Holy and hovered over the mercy seat, so that the priests might be enabled to conduct their service in the Holy Place. Thus had been accomplished God's first purpose with Israel for which He had chosen them: God

had made a covenant with them above all peoples and dwelt in their midst. The name of the tabernacle already indicates this fact, for what has been rendered "tabernacle" really means "tent of meeting," it was the tent where God met with His people, where He came to them and they to Him. As long as the people were engaged on their journey, God's presence was made manifest in the cloud which descended upon the tabernacle and ascended when they resumed the journey (Ex. 40:36-38). After they had entered Canaan this external sign disappeared, but God's presence in the Most Holy Place remained.

Questions:—1. By what act had the people of Israel violated the covenant, which they had hardly made with God?—2. To whom alone did they owe it that their sins were forgiven and the covenant again established?—3. How was Moses involved?—4. To what petition did the experience of God's grace encourage him?—5. Why would he fain see God's glory?—6. What can this petition of Moses only mean?—7. Since this petition came so dangerously near to presumption what answer on the part of God could be expected?—8. What two facts, indeed, did He emphatically give Moses to understand?—9. Still, how did He not treat Moses' petition?—10. What did He rather promise Moses?—11. Why was it impossible to show him His essence without any veil?—12. What would He let pass by Moses that he might see Him from the back?—13. But what must Moses first bring to God before He could let His godness and mercy pass by before him?—14. Why was the renewal of the tables necessary?—15. Why are we not told what Moses saw when God passed by before him?—16. What, however, did God in passing by proclaim concerning His nature so that Moses could hear it?—17. What is God's innermost nature according to His own testimony?—18. How can you say it is Love when this word does not even occur in His testimony?—19. What does He mention beside His love?—20. What shows though that He lays chief stress upon love?—21. A nobler revelation of God's nature than this testimony of God the Old Testament does not contain; how about the New Testament?—22. What was Moses' response to this revelation of God?—23. What did God now repeat on Moses' request?—24. What relation was thereby formally and unmistakably renewed?—25. How were the tables used that Moses had taken with him?—26. For what purpose did Moses again remain with the Lord for forty days?—27. How was it externally evident that Moses had seen the Lord?—28. What lessons were the people to draw from it?—29. What did Moses now do since the people feared him on account of the lustre on his face?—30. What New Testament passage refers to the lustre on Moses' face?—31. What was now to be undertaken since the covenant was renewed?—32. Who directed the building of the tabernacle?—33. According to what plan was it built?—34. What chapters tell of the erection?—35. What happened when the building was completed?

—36. What did God mean to indicate when the cloud that had led Israel, that afterwards descended on Moses' tent, now entered the tabernacle and finally hovered over the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies?—37. What is the real name of the tabernacle according to the correct translation?—38. How do name and significance agree?—39. With what blessed fact does the book of Exodus thus conclude?

Since God had entered into the midst of *Īs'ra'el* and made them His dwelling place, it followed that *Īs'ra'el*, too, must be holy (Lev. 19:2). This is the substance of the **third book of Mō'ses**, called **Lē vīt'ī cūs**. In three parts it shows: 1. what the sacrifices and who the priests should be, through whom *Īs'ra'el* should serve the holy God, chapters 1—10; 2. how the people must be sanctified and consecrated in their bodies in order to serve the holy God, chapters 11—16; 3. how they, including their priests, should be holy in life and conduct (chapters 17—27) in order to receive the blessing and not the curse of God (chapter 26).

Since the third book of Moses treats in detail of the order of sacrifices, the conduct of which was entirely in the hands of the Levites, it is called **Leviticus**. The individual laws and ordinances of Leviticus, the majority of which are done away with since the coming of Christ (Gal. 4:8—11; Col. 2:16), are not mentioned here for that reason, though the most important of them are briefly summarized on page 172 ff. Some of the ordinances contained therein were common among many of the ancient peoples. At God's command Moses revived, cleansed, and perfected them. He had learned to know them in Egypt and from his father-in-law Jethro (compare pages 104 and 105). Above all things they were brought in relation with the faith in the true God of Israel and recognized as something that must follow from the trust in His presence in Israel's midst (Lev. 19:2, 10, 12, 16, 18, 30—37; 11:44, 45). The fulfillment of the commandments should be an expression of the **gratitude** of the people for their deliverance from Egypt and the indwelling of God.

The **fourth book of Mō'ses** also contains various legal ordinances, but on the whole is of historical nature. It already turns its eye towards *Cā'nāan* which God had promised. Its three parts portray: 1. the preparations for the

journey, (chapters 1—10:10); 2. the journey from Sî'nâi to the Land East of the Jôr'dan (chapters 10:11—21:20); 3. the conquest of the Land East of the Jôr'dan and its division (chapters 21:21—36:13).

1. **The preparations for the Journey.** Numbers 1: 1—10: 10.—Read Numbers 1:1—4; 1:47—54; 2:1—34; 3:40—51; 6:22—27; 9:1—5; 9:15—23.

Israel had camped at Sinai for nearly a year (Ex. 19:1, and Numbers 1:1; 10:11) and now the time had come to continue the journey. For that reason preparations were now made for breaking camp. Since Israel's immediate future meant warlike activity,—the land of Canaan must be taken by force of arms—its **men able to go forth to war were first of all numbered and ordered** (Numbers 1: 1—46). And since the fourth book of Moses begins with the account of this numbering it is called **Numbers**. The numbering showed 603,550 men for military service, i. e., men above 20 years of age (Numbers 1:46). These were to be drilled and hardened in the wilderness so as to make them fit for the later battles. They were classed according to their tribes. As families to the present day cling together and perhaps even carry a record, in which all the members of the family are recorded, the various tribes in Israel also did. And so well was this done that even at the time of Jesus it could be determined to which tribe an individual Israelite belonged. Captains were appointed over the men of war of each tribe, and these again appointed their subordinates.

Only the **members of the tribe of Levi** were kept separate. Aaron belonged to this tribe. He and his sons and their descendants were to be the priests in Israel, who alone were authorized to offer sacrifices in the tabernacle (Ex. 28:1; Lev. 9:1—24). The other members of the tribe and their descendants were to be the servants at the sanctuary. It was their office to pull up the tent stakes of the tabernacle when camp was broken, it was for them to pitch the tent when a camp was formed, and it was their duty to perform all other functions connected with the sanctuary (Num. 1:47—54; Num. 3 and 4). At the time when the people left Sinai there were altogether 22,000 Levites. In reality all firstborn sons of all tribes should have been set aside for the service of God at the sanctuary as an expression of thanks for the deliverance of Israel's firstborn, when Egypt's firstborn were slain (Ex. 13:2; 22:29; 34:19; Lev. 27:26; Num. 3:13; 8:14—19; 3:40—51); compare page 111. But in place of the firstborn God took the

descendants of Levi. And since the number of all the firstborn was greater than the male descendants of Levi, He ordained that for every other firstborn a ransom of 5 shekels (in Jesus' days the equivalent of the wage for twenty days, Luke 2:23) should be paid to the sanctuary (Num. 3:40-51).

The men of war, however, were not only numbered and the necessary captains appointed, but they were also classified so that each tribe received its particular place around the tabernacle. In this order of the camp, with the tabernacle in the center, the people of God is pictured as it should be. It should be the congregation of the faithful or the saints, that has its controlling center in the Word of God as the revelation of God. If the privilege of marching at the head of the train (Num. 2:3) is assigned to the tribe of Judah, it merely shows that the word of dying Jacob is not forgotten (Gen. 49:8-12; comp. page 96). Rather is this the evidence that it is beginning to be fulfilled.

Since Israel is now forced to leave its rest at the mountain of God and again enter into dangers of the wilderness and pass through foreign peoples, Aaron and his sons are given a fixed form of blessing (**the Aaronitic blessing**) with which each morning and evening to bless the people of God on its wanderings, and assure them of the fact: the God who revealed Himself to us on Mt. Sinai will lead us into the land of Canaan (Num. 6:22-27). This blessing ever and again differentiates the people of Israel from all other nations and marks them as God's own people (Ex. 19:5, 6; comp. page 125), for God's blessing is not an empty formula, but really assigns to him, who is blessed with it, divine gifts. For this reason Num 6:27 expressly states: When Aaron and his sons put Jahve's Name upon the children of Israel, i. e., with lifted hands pronounce the blessing over the people, God Himself will acknowledge it and turn His blessings towards them. The Aaronitic blessing consists of three parts, each with two articulations. The first part is general: Jahve, the faithful God of Israel, who interferes to His people's benefit (comp. page 108), from whom all blessing comes, shall also bless His people, i. e., cause them to receive in rich measure all the gifts they need. Especially will He protect and keep them under the wings of His omnipotence, so that they can dwell in safety. Though Israel continues its wanderings, though hostile nations assail it as did the Amalekites (Ex. 17:8), even though it find many a Marah (Ex. 15:23), it shall nevertheless know, the Lord will bless me, i. e., give to me what I need, and the Lord protects me and will not permit me to perish on the way. The

second part is more specific, more plenteous, above all things more spiritual. In place of the simple name, Jahve or Lord, it speaks of Jahve's face. When we turn our face to some one, we do so either to frighten him with our eyes or show him our friendliness and that we mean well with him. Thus also Jahve will turn a friendly face to Israel, shine upon it, so that it may be happy and encouraged. The Lord will be **gracious**, i. e., in place of wrath and judgment, He will show His friendly disposition and His love, so that Israel may at all times know: my God is not against me, rather is He on my side (Rom. 8:31). The third part takes up the second and strengthens it: Jahve will lift His countenance upon Israel and give it **peace**. He will not only look with friendliness upon Israel, but will manifest His power, so that Israel will have **peace**, peace with men, but above all things that inner peace, peace with God, and be happy and blessed. What we Christians confess in the three articles of the creed as the gifts of God, is already included in the Aaronitic blessing. As far as such was possible in the Old Testament, this blessing would turn these to Israel every day. Whenever we listen to it to-day in our Christian worship, it is only natural that its three parts should remind us of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the gifts of grace which we receive in faith.

When the first month of the second year after the exodus came, Israel celebrated its paschal feast or **passover** (Num. 9:1-5) at Sinai, thereby conforming to the divine order given in Egypt (Ex. 12:14).—Finally the **signs** and **signals** were given for the people's guidance that they might move or halt at the proper time, since the train was far too large for all divisions to hear Moses' voice (Num. 9:15-10:10). The Lord Himself would lead Israel in the pillar of the cloud, as He had promised Moses (Ex. 33:14-17). Whenever the cloud was lifted from the tabernacle, Israel moved, whenever it rested upon the tabernacle, they halted and camped. Thus the people were to camp "according to the commandment of the Lord," and march "according to the commandment of the Lord" (Num. 9:20), just as the congregation of the Lord to the present day should recognize only one regulative principle for its conduct, the Word of God.—Now the people were ready for the journey.

Questions:—1. Into how many parts is the book of Genesis divided?—2. How far does the first part extend?—3. What does it tell us?—4. How far does the second part extend?—5. What does this part tell us?—6. Into how many parts is the book of Exodus divided?—7. How far does the first, the second, the third, the fourth part extend?—8. What does the first, the second,

the third, the fourth part relate?—9. What does the third book of Moses treat of?—10. Into how many parts is it divided?—11. How far does the first, the second, the third part extend?—12. What does it show in the first part?—13. What in the second?—14. What in the third?—15. Why is it called the book of Leviticus?—16. In what relation do many of the laws contained in Leviticus stand to the ordinances of other ancient peoples?—17. What is the fundamental difference between the laws given by God to Israel through Moses and those of other nations?—18. And from what was Israel's obedience to the laws of God to flow?—19. In what respect is the contents of the fourth book of Moses common to Leviticus?—20. What is the chief difference between them?—21. Towards what does it already turn its eye?—22. What does it therefore portray in its first part?—23. What in its second?—24. And what in its third part?—25. How long had Israel camped at Mt. Sinai?—26. What, according to Num. 1—10:11, did the three preparations for the journey consist of?—27. Why was the numbering of their forces necessary?—28. How large was the number of men above 20 years, and able to do military service?—29. According to what were they classified?—30. How was it possible to determine to what tribe a man belonged?—31. Who were appointed over the men of war of each tribe?—32. How is the fourth book of Moses called because it begins with the account of this numbering?—33. What tribe was kept separate?—34. Who were to be taken from this tribe?—35. Who was to serve as priests?—36. What was to be their duty?—37. What were the other members of this tribe to be?—38. What duties were they to perform?—39. How many Levites were there at this time?—40. Who, by right, should have served the Lord in His sanctuary?—41. Why the firstborn?—42. For what reason did God select the tribe of Levi in place of the firstborn?—43. What arrangement did God make since the number of the firstborn was greater than the number of the tribe of Levi?—44. From what story in the life of Jesus do we learn that this arrangement was in force after hundreds of years had passed?—45. What, in the second place, was part of the preparations for the journey to Canaan?—46. What stood in the center of this order of the camp?—47. In what respect does this order of the camp picture the people of God as it should be?—48. What tribe was permitted to march at the head of the train?—49. What prophecy was thus beginning to be fulfilled?—50. What more belonged to the preparations for the journey?—51. How was this blessing that Aaron as the high priest was to pronounce each morning and evening to be regarded?—52. How many parts does the Aaronitic blessing consist of?—53. Recite the first part!—54. How do you understand these words?—55. Recite the second part!—56. Explain it!—57. Recite the third part!—58. Explain it!—59. What progression can you trace from the first to the third part?—60. Of what part of the Catechism does this three-fold blessing remind us?—61. What did Israel observe before it left Mt. Sinai?—62. What do you know of the signs

and signals according to which the movement or the halting of the large train was to be guided?—63. God therefore gave His directions by means of the cloud; in what respect should that be an example for every Christian congregation?

2. Israel's Journey from Sinai to the Land East of the Jordan.

Num. 10: 11—21: 20.—Read Num. 11: 1—35; 12: 1—15; 13: 1—34; 14: 1—45; 16: 1—35; 16: 41—50; 17: 1—13; 20: 1—13; 20: 22—29; 21: 1—9; 21: 10—20.

In the second month of the second year after the exodus from Egypt Israel broke camp at Sinai and journeyed strictly according to the directions given by God (Num. 10: 11—28). When the ark of the covenant was lifted up as a sign to proceed, Moses said, "Rise up, Lord, and let Thine enemies be scattered; let them that hate Thee flee before Thee." And when the ark rested, he said, "Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel." For the ark was looked upon as the place where the Lord dwelt in Israel.

The journey took them through the wilderness of **Paran** towards the southern boundary of Canaan, to **Kadesh-barnea** (Num. 10: 12; 13: 2; 32: 8). During this journey, however, Israel showed that it was still the old, **lustful**, earthly minded **people**, for it murmured as before (Ex. 16: 3) because it had no meat, and was tired of manna. Even though the discontent arose from the proletariat, that had united with Israel, yet even the people of Israel had permitted themselves to become infected, and also murmured. Yes they even murmured though some of the malcontents had been consumed by fire in the outskirts of the camp, as a warning for the whole people (Num. 11: 1—6). Even Moses became discouraged and wished for help as a result of this, not in order to settle disputes among individual members of the people—this was the duty of the men whom Moses had placed over the people at the advice of Jethro (Ex. 18: 14—27; comp. page 123)—but in order to bring the people to their senses when they murmured because of the lack of meat (Num. 11: 10—14). God corrected him for his lack of faith, and when he doubtfully asked, how one could provide so large a people for a month with meat, reminded him of His omnipotence (Num. 11: 18—23). At the same time He put seventy elders to assist Moses and in the presence of the people filled them with the same spirit which rested upon him, so that they might be a real assistance to him, and help in bringing back the discontented to reason and obedience (11: 16—17, 24—25). By providing them with **quails** in even greater number than in the previous year, God appeased their hunger for meat (Ex. 16: 13; comp. page 121),

but at the same time caused a great plague among them, so that many died as a punishment for their lusting. For this reason the place was called Kibroth-hattaavah (Num. 11:30—35).—But this matter had scarcely been adjusted through God's interference when none less than **Aaron** and **Miriam** turned against Moses and demanded to be made equal with him. Moses, indeed, was a much plagued man, "above all men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3). Then the Lord Himself interfered, even before Moses had complained, and gave to Moses the most beautiful testimony of fidelity, and showed that He had condescended to none as He did to him (verses 7 and 8), and He departed from them in anger. He punished Miriam with leprosy, which clung to her for seven days even though Moses interceded for her, and she who demanded to be put on a level with Moses, was compelled to remain outside of the camp for seven days (comp. Lev. 13:45, 46) as a horrifying example for every one, who refused to concede that Moses alone was the mediator between God and Israel (Num. 12).

Soon the journey through the wilderness of Paran was completed, and in its northern part (wilderness of Zin 13:22) they reached **Kadesh-barnea** (13:27). Thus they approached the southern part of Canaan. They were about to enter, for Moses had already been ordered to send forth men to spy out the country (Num. 1:13). The desire to learn about the land through spies had proceeded from the people themselves according to Deut. 1:22. God acceded to this desire and Himself gave the directions for their selection (13:2—17). They were to bring certain knowledge on two points based upon personal observation, 1. whether Canaan is, indeed, so richly blessed a country as had been promised them, 2. whether there were grave hindrances for its conquest (Num. 13:18—24). This two-fold knowledge, according to the ruling of God, was to be the test to decide whether the people had, indeed, been trained to a firm confidence in His faithfulness and power through the many manifestations of His help which they had experienced. The spies travelled through the country as far as the brook Eshcol (the present valley of Hebron, where even yet, though its fruits no longer attain to the former size and weight, grapes are raised weighing 10—12 pounds; "Eshcol" means "grape"), and returned with samples of the extraordinary productiveness of the country. But they also brought the tidings that it was inhabited by a strong and in part giant people*

* The sons of Anak (verses 28 and 33) belonged to the tribe of Rephaim (= giants), who lived in Palestine before the days of the Canaanites, some of whom continued until the days of David (2 Sam. 21:16—22; 1 Chron. 20:4).

that was accustomed to go forth to war (13:33) and also possessed fortified cities. The samples of productiveness should have been an earnest of God's fidelity and dependability, for it coincided with His promise of a land "flowing with milk and honey."* This together with their former experiences should have filled them with courage to conquer the nations of Canaan. But their unbelief was so great, that this news of the spies not only robbed them of all their courage, but also incited them to stone Joshua and Caleb, when they attempted to fill them with courage by pointing to the certain help of Jahve (13:26-34; 14:1-10). Nothing of what God had hoped to bring about in Israel through His miraculous guidance, namely of faith, had been attained. No wonder, that the glory of the Lord appeared before them (verse 10), and that His patience with this obstinate people came to an end, and He again threatened (Ex. 32:10) to exterminate them and make Moses a great people in their stead (14:10-12).^{*} But Moses, who never sought his own benefit, again interceded for Israel, and besought the Lord for His glory's sake (verses 13-16) and for the sake of His great mercy to forgive the people (14:13-19).

And in His mercy and grace God, indeed, did desist from His purpose of exterminating the people. But in order to establish a memorial of warning for all times, and that all the world might know that He is a jealous God, who will not tolerate persistent sinning (verse 21), God sentenced all who were twenty years of age or above at the time of the exodus from Egypt (verse 29) and had seen all His miracles, and yet had not been trained to true faith, not to see the promised land. **Instead they shall wander about in the wilderness for 38 years and finally die there.** Only Joshua and Caleb shall live and enter Canaan. That was a heavy but a well earned punishment (Num. 14:20-35). And to the present day no man can enter upon the possession of the promised heavenly gifts of the upper Canaan and its blessing, who maliciously opposes divine grace and persists in hardening himself against it. Our God is longsuffering and of great mercy and forgives iniquity and transgression. But He is also a holy God, who will punish all who harden themselves and rebel against His grace (verse 18; comp. Ex. 34:6-7; 20:5-6; Deut. 7:9-10; Jer. 32:18; Gal. 6:7-8; Hebr. 10:31). When the people on the day following nevertheless attempted to penetrate into Canaan on their strength, they were disastrously defeated (Num. 14:40-45). They had sor-

* Here the honey of the grape is meant.

rowed, indeed, and recognized that they had sinned, but that it was not a matter of true repentance, they showed by the fact that it was only obstinacy which bade an attempt to enter now. True repentance submits to God's judgment, willingly assumes the temporal punishment and is glad and grateful if it escapes eternal condemnation; comp. 2 Cor. 7:9-10.

The end was nearly gained, but man's perversity put God's plan to naught. It is God's **grace** which will not permit it to be brought to naught forever. And it is God's **wisdom**, which ever and again finds a new way, even in spite of man's sins, to realize His will for salvation (Rom. 11:33). The whole course of sacred history is only a series of ever new attempts of grace. Compare the new beginning in Noah after the flood, and the new beginning in Abraham, after the descendants of Noah had fallen in heathendom. Thus here also. The former obstinate generation according to its own wicked word (Num. 14:2) must die in the wilderness and make room for a new generation which will be led to the promised land. Israel in truth could say what is written Micah 7:18.

A great mortality now set in in Israel (Num. 14:36 f.). It was during these years, perhaps, when thousands upon thousands died in Moses' immediate vicinity under the wrath of God, that Moses composed and prayed the 90th psalm. There he flees from the dying and passing away of men (Ps. 90:3-6) to the eternal God, who alone abides (verses 1 and 2). He acknowledges, that men will merit such dying, where they no longer attain to a greater age than 70 or 80 years (verse 10), and that the wrath of God over their sins that is well deserved (verses 7-9), becomes manifest therein, and he fervently prays, that God might again turn to them in His grace (verses 13-17).

Questions:—1. What does the first part of the book of Numbers relate?—2. How far does the second part extend?—3. What does this part contain?—4. When did Israel begin its journey from Mount Sinai?—5. What did Moses say when the ark of the covenant was lifted up as a sign to proceed?—6. And what did he say when the ark rested?—7. Why could he repeat these words?—8. In what direction did the people journey?—9. In what way did the people of Israel again sin on this journey?—10. Wherein did this sin differ from the one committed on the way from the Red Sea to Mount Sinai?—11. By what was the people especially warned on this occasion?—12. What effect did this incorrigible discontent have upon Moses?—13. How did God correct him for his lack of faith?—14. Whom did God none the less appoint as his assistants to help to bring back the discontented ones to reason and obedience?—15. How did God then provide for the people?—16. What punishment, however, did

He impose for their disobedience?—17. How did Aaron and Miriam soon after sin too?—18. How did God clearly indicate to them and to the whole people that none but Moses was the mediator between God and the people?—19. What did the people approach when they arrived at Kadesh-Barnea?—20. Who occasioned the sending of the spies?—21. What two questions were they to clear up?—22. What was to depend on their report?—23. What was their finding regarding the two questions?—24. What should Israel have recognized from their report on the productiveness of the country?—25. What should the continued experience of God's fidelity have encouraged them to do?—26. What, however, did their unbelief rob them of?—27. How did Joshua and Caleb try to encourage them?—28. How did the people respond?—29. What became apparent thereby?—30. And what appeared now suddenly?—31. What did God in His wrath threaten to do with His people?—32. Who now entered again as mediator?—33. How did he discharge his office?—34. How did he succeed with God?—35. What judgment did God pronounce, however, that Israel should learn once for all that its sins will not go unpunished?—36. Who alone should be permitted to enter Canaan?—37. What lesson should we Christians derive from this heavy punishment?—38. How did the following day disclose that Israel's repentance was not heartfelt, in spite of the threatened judgment?—39. To what does true repentance willingly submit?—40. What now set in at once in Israel?—41. What psalm did Moses indite at this time?—42. How many different things does Moses do in this psalm?—43. What in the first place?—44. What in the second place?—45. And what in the third?—46. What verse is especially impressive in view of the time of its origin?—47. What may be learned from the fact that God did not destroy the whole people?—48. What does the fact reflect that God even now found a new way to realize His will for salvation?—49. Where does Paul magnify this wisdom of God?

Holy Writ almost entirely passes by the 38 years in silence which Israel spent in the wilderness. Moses, Aaron, and the whole tribe of Levi with the ark of the covenant seem to have spent the time in the neighborhood of Kadesh, whilst the other tribes scattered. Not a few wandered as far as the Gulf of Akaba (Num. 33:19-35), others, like the tribe of Reuben, to the land east of the Jordan. During this dispersion they lived without worship and without circumcision (Joshua 5:2-7); many may even have served idols (Ezekiel 20:13-26). Yet even in the dispersion they do not seem to have lost all contact with Kadesh and the sanctuary. No doubt they returned occasionally, perhaps assisting the tribe of Levi to keep up the services at the sanctuary by bringing beasts for sacrifice and articles of food. God's faithfulness carried them even during this long period of punishment.

The only events of importance recorded of this period of punishment are the **rebellion of Korah** and his associates against Moses and Aaron (Num. 16), and the confirmation of the highpriesthood of Aaron through God (Num. 16 and 17). This rebellion is all the more important because it was really a rebellion against the constitution given to the people by God Himself. Korah like Moses and Aaron was a member of the tribe of Levi, while Dathan and Abiram were Reubenites. They claimed that Moses and Aaron had arrogated to themselves the office and had made themselves mediators between God and the people, whereas the whole people in whose midst God dwells is holy and consists of priests, thus making a special priesthood and mediatorship unnecessary (verse 3). And, indeed, God had declared of the whole people, that they should be a holy people and a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:6). But He had also expressly called Moses and Aaron to be mediators, in order to train the people to be a holy people through their ministration. To rebel against the office of Moses and Aaron, therefore, was akin to rebelling against God. Thus when Moses heard the seditious speech of Korah and his associates he bowed to the ground before God in sorrow (verse 4), and then in an address to Korah, he showed him his grievous wrong (verses 5—11). Dathan and Abiram had, no doubt, retreated to their tents during this address. And when Moses called them, they refused to obey him, the divinely appointed leader, and assailed him with words of reproach and ridicule (verses 12—14). Conscious of his innocence Moses appealed to God and prayed for His decision (verse 15). At the same time he prepared the decision when he ordered the insurrectionaries to step to the side of himself and Aaron with censers in order to offer incense before the Lord as priests (verses 16—18). And when they did this, the whole people even went over to the side of Korah against Moses (verse 19). The result was a terrible judgment. The Lord Himself appeared in His glory, ordered the whole congregation to step away from the tents of the rebellious, and the next moment Korah, Dathan, and Abiram together with their families and all their possessions were swallowed up by the earth opened through the omnipotence of God (verses 19—33)! The 250 associates of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (verse 2) were slain before the tabernacle by fire which proceeded from the Lord present in the cloud (verse 35), similar to Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, when they meddled in their father's office (Lev. 10:1—7). Later on at the command of the Lord the censers which had served holy purposes, namely purposes of worship, even though in the hands of evildoers, were taken from the midst of

the dead and as things banned (Lev. 27:28) were fastened to the altar, to serve as a warning for every one who might attempt to arrogate to himself priestly functions without being called thereto (verse 36—40). This terrible judgment, indeed, thoroughly cowed the people (verse 34) but wrought no true repentance, no change of heart, for on the day following already the people heaped reproaches upon Moses and Aaron and charged **them** with being the cause of the death of the punished ones, whereas in reality it was due to Moses' and Aaron's intercession, that they were not annihilated together with the insurrectionaries (verses 21—22)! Then the Lord again appeared and His glory flashed forth from the cloud. The entire people should be exterminated. Moses and Aaron who had learned to be merciful and compassionate with sinners, again interceded with God and propitiated the sins of the people (verses 46 and 47. The incense is the symbol of intercession, for as its fragrance rises up to God, the supplication comes before Him.) and their mediatorial work at least accomplished this one thing that not more than 14,700 succumbed to sudden death (verses 41—50).

As God thereby ratified the special priesthood of Aaron before all the people, He also did so by means of a lasting memorial: **Aaron's rod**, withered as were the rods of the other tribes, which at the behest of God, Moses placed in the tabernacle, blossomed and brought forth buds and fruits. This wonderfully metaphorical language was to inform Israel of the fact, that as Aaron's rod was withered, as were the rods of the other tribes, he is no more qualified by nature than the other Israelites to discharge the functions of a special priesthood. But as his rod was made to blossom through the omnipotence of God, thus also God Himself has qualified him for his special office, so that his office brings results (Num. 17:1—9). If Moses then was to keep the rod of Aaron before the ark of the covenant, and thus in the immediate presence of the Lord (for the ark was regarded as the place of God's presence), this fact was to be for him an earnest and a pledge of the enduring character of his priesthood (which does not necessarily imply that Aaron's rod continued to bloom). But for the obstinate and rebellious people it was a sign of the enduring condemnation of their murmurings against Aaron (17:10—11). This, of course, left an indelible impression on the minds of the people (verses 12—13).

That the covenant relation of God with Israel did not cease during this long period of punishment nor was abrogated for the future is evident from the fact that God during this period also con-

tinued to announce additional laws (for instance Num 15; 18; 19). Among these the ordinance is worthy of special mention according to which the **Levites** were to receive no special **patrimony in the land of Canaan**, but in place of this were to be entitled to certain portions of the offerings and the tenth part (tithes) of everything which the other tribes raised on their fields, trees, and flocks (Num. 18:8—24), and also the regulations according to which the people who had been defiled by touching the dead were to be purified and cleansed, which regulation (Num. 19:14—20) also helps the better to understand Ps. 51:7.

When the long period of punishment had come to an end the people came together at **Kadesh** (Num. 20:1, compare 13:1, 4 and 32:8). Here **Miriam**, the sister of **Moses** and **Aaron**, died. Of course the generation now grown up in the wilderness, which should have received a living impression of the holiness of God which punishes, owing to the death of all who had been twenty or more years of age when they migrated from Egypt and the whole long period of punishment in general, was not essentially changed. When they lacked water they murmured just as their fathers had murmured before them (Num. 20:2—5, compare Ex. 17:8), and after a while they tired of **Manna**, the "bread of heaven" (Num. 21:4—5). Alas, even **Moses** and **Aaron sinned** (20:13) at **Meribah** (the water of strife), for instead of speaking to the rock as God had ordered (20:8) **Moses spoke** to the people (20:10) and struck the rock, and he struck the rock twice, as if the success depends on his doing and not on God's power alone. **Moses** seems in a way to have become fatigued when he heard this new generation also murmur over the water famine, and for the moment lost his former assurance of faith and his ever willing obedience. Whereas he formerly stood forth as an impregnable rock, he now as it were received a little shock. God, indeed, now answered their call, and gave the people the water from the rock, but He also severely punished **Moses'** and **Aaron's** disobedience. Neither of them shall enter the promised land, both shall die this side of the **Jordan** (verse 12). If this punishment seems severe especially as regards **Moses**, we must not lose sight of the height to which God had elevated him. God had spoken with him as a friend speaks with a friend, indeed, God had shown him as much of His glory as any mortal being is capable of seeing. But the higher God elevates a person, the more he must be careful even of minutest details. The more God has given, the more He demands (Luke 12:48). It shows that God is the Holy One who will not connive at anything even with the highest

and most prominent, because He hates sin for sin's sake and at every cost excludes it from His presence.

Aaron also, after conferring the office and the insignia of the highpriesthood upon his son Eleazar, died soon after. Moses, however, still had some great tasks to perform. At Kadesh-Barnea the people, indeed, found themselves at the borders of Canaan, but God for reasons of His own would lead them into the land from the east and not from the south. At the eastern border the shortest way into the land would have led them through the country of the Edomites. But the Edomites, though descendants of Esau, Israel's brother-people, refused them permission to pass through their land (20:14—21). But since Israel was neither to war against nor extirpate the Edomites, for God Himself had given them their land, the mountain country of Seir (Gen. 26:8, 43; Deut 2:5), it meant that Moses was forced to lead the people around the whole section of the Edomites that is south-east to the Gulf of Akaba and then to the east of the land of Edom and finally north again (21:4). But this route was in part extraordinarily waste and desolate. There it happened, that Israel murmured over its Manna, at times, perhaps, its only means of subsistence (Num. 21:4—9). Though it had proven itself during so many years a nourishing and sufficient diet, now they loathed it as a "light bread," i. e., worthless unnutritive diet (verse 5), only fit to call forth nausea and protest. Was it a wonder that God again interfered and punished them? Israel had claimed, the Manna was only nauseating, God therefore sent them serpents, that surely filled them with nausea and fear. These were fiery or burning serpents, i. e., serpents, whose venomous bite caused burning wounds and finally culminated in death (perhaps they also were marked with fiery red spots or stripes, such as are still found in that section). Many people in Israel died as a result. When the people now recognized that they had grievously sinned by murmuring against God, and Moses again interceded for them, God commanded him to make a brass likeness of the fiery serpent and fasten it to a pole, so that it could be seen from far and near. He who looks upon this and trusts that Jahve can and will help, shall recover from the venomous bite. Thus the lifting up of the brass serpent in the wilderness is a prototype of Christ, whose lifting up to the cross is the redemption of man from sin and death (John 3:14). He who is wounded unto death by sin and the Devil shall find rescue and life, if he will look upon the crucified and exalted Savior and believe from his heart that He has brought about salvation for him.

Questions:—1. How long was Israel compelled to wander about in the wilderness as a punishment for their unbelief?—2. How are we to picture this stay in the wilderness?—3. What rebellion happened during this time?—4. Against whom was the rebellion of Korah directed?—5. What evidently was the opinion of Korah and all his associates?—6. How much truth was there to this opinion?—7. In what way, however, was their action unqualified rebellion against Moses and Aaron?—8. Against whom was it directed in the last analysis?—9. What did Moses do when this rebellion faced him?—10. To whom did Moses appeal for a decision when Dathan and Abiram refused obedience?—11. How did he prepare the decision, conscious that God was on his side?—12. What attitude did the people take?—13. How did God intervene?—14. Where did Moses, at the command of God, fasten the censers of the rebels as a warning against future rebellions?—15. Whereby can you tell that even so terrible a judgment did not bring the people to true repentance?—16. What therefore occurred once more?—17. To whom did the people again owe it that they were not exterminated?—18. To what was the punishment reduced as a result of the intercession of Moses and Aaron?—19. By what means did God furthermore ratify the special priesthood of Aaron?—20. What was Israel to learn from this metaphorical language that Aaron's rod blossomed?—21. What was the two-fold significance of the fact that Aaron's rod was to be kept before the ark of the covenant?—22. What incident proves that the covenant relation between God and Israel did not entirely cease during the long period of judgment?—23. What ordinances did God proclaim during this time that deserve special mention?—24. Where did Israel assemble after the 38 years of punishment had come to an end?—25. Who died in Kadesh?—26. What clearly demonstrates that the generation grown up in the wilderness was not essentially changed?—27. Who also sinned at Meribah?—28. Wherein did Moses' sin consist?—29. How can you account for it?—30. How did God show that He did not repudiate Moses despite his sin?—31. What punishment, however, did He impose on Moses and Aaron?—32. This punishment may appear too severe; what, however, must be taken into consideration?—33. Where did Jesus later announce the principle on which God acted in this case?—34. Who of the two died first?—35. For what did God still want to use Moses before he died?—36. From what direction was the people to enter the promised land according to God's will?—37. What would have been the most direct route to the eastern borders of Canaan?—38. Why did they not take this route?—39. What, therefore, was Moses' great task?—40. What sin did Israel commit on their journey around the land of the Edomites?—41. Why was this a specially grievous sin?—42. How did God punish them?—43. Explain the nature of the fiery serpents!—44. What did Moses again do for the people?—45. How did God help those who trusted in Him?—46. In what respect is the brazen serpent a type of Christ?

3. **The Conquest of the Land East of the Jordan and its Division,** Num. 21: 21—36: 13.—Read Numbers' 21: 21—35; 22: 1—24; 27: 12—23; 32: 1—33; 33: 50—56.

When Israel had reached the Gulf of Akaba, they again turned to the north and journeyed along the eastern edge of the land of Edom. Here this country was not guarded by natural boundaries as on the west side where precipitous mountains made approach difficult. For this reason, no doubt, the Edomites feared to oppose Israel's march, rather did they furnish them with meat and drink as much as they needed, taking a compensation in return (Deut. 2: 1—7). North of Edom and east of the Dead Sea is the land of the Moabites. These, too, as well as the Ammonites, their kinsfolk, (both of them descendants of Lot, Gen. 19: 36—38; Deut. 2: 9, 19) should not be molested by Israel (Deut. 2: 8—19). For this reason the Israelites journeyed along the eastern edge of the land of the Moabites until they came to the brook of Arnon (Num. 21: 10—13). Beyond the Arnon dwelled the Amorites, who had come down from the Libanon and domiciled themselves in this section. Somehow the people of Bashan to the north were related to them (Deut. 3: 8). Like the Amorites on the west side, of the Jordan, who had also come down from the north (Josh. 10), they were descendants of Canaan (for this reason Canaanites, compare Gen. 10: 16; 15: 21; Ex. 3: 8). What stand will they, who in no way stood under the special protection of God, take towards Israel, which now for the first time as a nation steps into the ranks of nations and demands a place of permanent residence? **How will the heathen receive the people of God, the son of God** (Ex. 4: 22; compare page 125)? It was a most important moment fraught with many possibilities for the most distant future. Indeed, though the Israelites only begged for the privilege peacefully to pass through their land, the **Amorites** opposed them. Then Israel smote them with the edge of the sword and took possession of their entire land (Num. 21: 21—25). They did the same thing with **Bashan** to the north whose king also met them sword in hand (21: 32—35). That was a promising beginning which brought the greater part of the **land east of the Jordan** into their possession and thus from the very beginning symbolized a two-fold fact: 1. that God's people and kingdom will ever meet with hostility on the part of the world; 2. that it will gain the final victory. One can readily understand how Israel's enthusiasm found expression in poetry and compiled a collection of hymns and songs on the wars of the Lord. Num. 21: 14, 15 and 21: 27—30 furnish samples of these. The last passage expresses the assurance that now, the Amorites being ex-

tirpated, the Moabites will, indeed, not be annihilated, but made subject to Israel.

Israel now journeyed to the southwest from the conquered territory and camped in the **plains of Moab**, across from Jericho, i. e., the part which formerly belonged to the Moabites but had been wrested from them by the Amorites (22:1). This proximity of Israel who had conquered the powerful Amorites and the king of Bashan greatly distressed Balak, the king of the Moabites (22:2—4). He well saw that he could accomplish nothing against this victorious people with his sword, so he tried magic, and sent emissaries to **Balaam**, the conjurer at Pethor on the Euphrates (22:5; "Aram," in 23:7 is Mesopotamia) to come and break Israel's power through his curse (22:5—6). Balaam was a strangely composite character. He was a heathen, who would by far have preferred to hasten to the assistance of his heathen friends, especially since they had agreed to compensate him and thus satisfy his avarice (2 Peter 2:12). Yet he was one of those who at the same time still retained some knowledge of the living God. He may have, perhaps through the Midianites, heard something of what Jahve had done for Israel and thus received a deep impression of Jahve (compare Jethro, Ex. 18:1). Indeed, he was fully conscious of the fact that he could do nothing against the will of Jahve (Num. 22:13, 18, 38; 23:12, 26; 24:12, 13). Since he was regarded as a prophet of Jahve and yet did not belong to the children of Israel, Balak, no doubt, thought him the very man to weaken Israel through his magical powers. But just because Balaam knew that he was dependent upon the Lord and that He had blessed Israel, he at first at the command of God refused to come to Balak (22:15—17). And thus he should have continued instead of asking God for the second time, if he really only wished to abide by God's will. But when Balak offered him still greater honor and reward (22:15—17), his own commerciality and avarice prodded him again to ask God, and this reveals his duplicity. He did not dare to act contrary to God's express command, yet in his sinful anxiety importunes him to consent in his favor (22:18—19). And God, who kept His own counsels and intended to use Balaam as His instrument, to serve Him though against his will, now permitted him to go to Balak, yet under this condition that he will only do what God will tell him (verse 20). The haste and joy with which Balaam undertook the journey shows that his greed for gain was stronger than anything else. And the closer he came to Balak the greater this greed must have grown. Indeed, there was a danger of his getting so completely

under its control, that he would no longer heed God's command but simply do whatever Balak demanded, only to receive the reward. This of course could not bring God's plans to naught—no man can do that—but he himself would perish. God is not willing that the sinner should perish, rather would He save him and bring him to full obedience towards His will (Ezek. 18:23; 2 Peter 3:9). For this reason He meets Balaam on the way, even causes his ass to speak to him, to give him a living impression of His omnipotence, so that he would not permit his avarice to lead him astray and say something different from that which God had commanded (22:22—23).

Just in which way the angel of the Lord met him, is not told us by Scripture, yet it can hardly be conceived as a purely psychological occurrence, as something that transpired in Balaam's soul life. On the other hand an external appearance in which the angel appeared in human form, tangible and visible, is equally precluded. The whole occurrence probably was similar to the appearance of the resurrected Christ, when He appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1—7). As the Risen One He appeared to Paul in His glorified corporeality, so that Paul plainly saw and heard Him, whereas his companions saw nothing: thus here, too, the angel of the Lord actually met Balaam, though not in a crudely sensuous form which could be grasped with the hand. Balaam did not see the angel of the Lord, because his greed after money had completely blinded his eyes for all things heavenly and divine. So much had he become enslaved by it, that he even lost all sense for natural things, or he would have told himself what his ass said to him (verse 30). That the ass perceived the appearance of the angel before Balaam became aware of it, is not so much to be wondered at, since it is a well known fact that animals possess a much better developed premonitory sense of natural phenomena, earthquakes, thunderstorms, etc., than man, and that some of them even possess the so-called "second sight," the power to perceive things not perceivable with the physical eye. And this, too, is all that Scripture says of the ass. Nowhere does it say that the ass recognized the angel of the Lord. As far as the much ridiculed **speaking of the ass** is concerned, note: 1. God is almighty and can open the mouths even of the beasts and make them teachers of men; 2. that the contents of what the ass is said to have said does not consist of truths which postulate rational deliberation of the human mind, but only of words which express the feelings and emotions of an animal; 3. that it has not even been settled beyond doubt whether God so shaped the anguished cry of the ass that it really sounded like human speech, or

whether it was simply the ordinary cry of anguish which by virtue of divine intervention sounded like human words to Balaam and was understood by him as such. God could scarcely have selected a better means to achieve the desired result. Balaam was to be made conscious of the extent to which his greed after gain had blinded him and made him impervious to divine influence. Indeed, so much was he blinded that he no longer perceived the divine apparition which even an irrational animal could and must see! And he was also to be made conscious of the fact that he dared not oppose God. How could he dare to do so, when even irrational beasts prefer a beating to disobedience to God?

And God gained His purpose. For when Balaam came to Balak he did, indeed, obey his command and prophesied over Israel, but he did not curse it as Balak had demanded. Rather did he bless it as the Lord had demanded (22:36—24:25). He began his work with sacrifices, as heathen augurs and conjurers were wont to do, and he also withdrew to a naked mound in solitude (23:3) in order to discern the will of God in all kinds of natural phenomena. But what he proclaimed was not the result of the observation of all kinds of signs, not mere human clairvoyance and prediction, but rather prophecy given him by God and thus fully trustworthy (23:5, 16; 24:2). His prophecy naturally unfolds itself as four statements, of which the one following always includes something greater than the one going before, and the two last ones are differentiated from the first two by the fact, that Balaam did not, as was customary among heathen conjurers, seek enchantments or signs (24:1), but abandoned himself entirely to the workings of the Spirit of God (24:2.)) The **first statement** of Balaam (23:7—10) looks upon the **origin** of the people of Israel. God has chosen this people from among all others as His own and has already blessed it in Abraham (Gen. 12:2, 3). The **second** (23:18—24) speaks of Israel's **present** status. God has delivered this people with a strong hand from the land of bondage and it is now about to take possession of its promised inheritance. The **third** (24:3—9) and **fourth** (24:15—24) look to the **future**. The third looks into the immediate future, for it speaks of the growth and allsided victorious development of Israel in Canaan; the fourth into the more distant future, for it sees a star arise out of Jacob and a Sceptre out of Israel, i. e., he sees how all surrounding peoples are victoriously subdued by Israel, if they will not like the Kenites willingly seek Israel's protection (1 Sam. 15:6). He even sees how the all-powerful and hostile Asshur (verses 22 and 24) will be destroyed by

nations coming from the west (verse 24, "ships coming from the coast of Chittim"). His vision takes him far beyond the age of David and Solomon and the whole prophecy finds its fulfillment in Christ, before whom and before whose kingdom all kingdoms of the world pale into nothingness. No wonder that Balak dismissed a prophet like that in wrath, for his prophecy also included Moab, and greeted Israel on its entrance into the nations of the world as the only nation that has a future, an enduring status. But what could have been more comforting to Israel than this at this juncture of its history? First, it succeeds in vanquishing the Amorites and the people of Bashan, then the only prophet of Jahve outside of its own ranks must bless it, instead of cursing it, and promises it victory over all its enemies and eternal endurance! Could God have done more to awaken a firm reliance in Himself among the people of Israel?

Balaam had fulfilled God's will, but since he was a prophet against his will, he himself received no blessing. Undoubtedly in order to receive at least some of the promised treasures of Balak he had counselled the Midianites, who were allied with the Moabites, to lead the Israelites to fornication through their own daughters and the daughters of the Moabites, and thus to call down the wrath of God upon Israel (24:13; 25:2, 3; 31:16). He succeeded in this, and 24,000 Israelites died as a punishment for this sin (25:9), but the Moabites as their punishment for this act were excluded forever from every participation in Israel (Deut. 23:2-6) and the Midianite women, who had especially excelled in this matter, were later slain, all of them (31:1-17), and Balaam also was killed (31:8). Thus Balaam stands forth for all times as a warning example for all who know the power of Jahve, but for the sake of some lust refuse wholly to dedicate themselves to Him. Phinehas on the other hand, a grandson of Aaron, who at this occasion had relentlessly championed the purity of the people and the honor of Jahve, received the promise, that the priesthood in Israel should forever remain with his family (25:11-13). And that really came to pass excepting only a short interruption during the days of Eli (1 Sam. 1-3, and 14:3). Until the dissolution of the Jewish state during the tyranny of Herod the Great, shortly before the birth of Christ, the priesthood was passed from father to son in the family of Phinehas, but then it was given to favorites. So during a period of approximately 1500 years, to the time when He came in whom all Old Testament priesthood ceased, namely Christ, the priesthood remained in this family. Thus God

fulfills what He promises, and thus rewards him who gives himself over wholly to Him.

On the plains of Moab, where Israel camped and where Balaam blessed them, they found themselves immediately opposite the territory of Jericho. Only the Jordan River separated them from Canaan proper. For this reason a census was again taken of all men of military age (comp. Num. 1), a number of rules governing the division of the country enunciated (Num. 26:1—56), **Moses death announced**, and **Joshua** appointed as his successor, to lead them into the promised land (27:12—23). Besides, the section already conquered on the **east side of the Jordan** was given to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh, and they were made to promise to aid the other tribes in conquering the land west of the Jordan (32:1—40). The order was given, completely to **extirpate** the **Canaanites** whose grievous sins had merited death, and especially to do away with everything which in any way recalled their idolatry (33:50—56); the **boundaries** of the country intended for Israel were **determined** (34:9—34), the residences (48 cities) assigned to the Levites, who received no other patrimony (35:1—13), certain cities designated as places of refuge for any slayer who killed a person unintentionally (35:9—34), and finally, special laws were passed to enable the individual tribes to retain the territory assigned to them in its original expanse. Thus everything seemed to have been taken care of at this time. Only one important thing remained, again to repeat and impress the law, which was to be the norm and rule for the civic, moral, and religious conduct of Israel in Canaan. This forms the contents of the fifth book of Moses, or Deuteronomy.

Questions:—1. Into how many parts is the book of Numbers divided?—2. What does the first, the second, the third part treat of?—3. How far does the third part extend?—4. In what direction did the Israelites travel from the Gulf of Akaba?—5. Why, perhaps, did the Edomites not risk an attack on Israel in this region?—6. What people lived to the north of Edom?—7. Where did the Ammonites live?—8. In what relation did they stand to the Moabites?—9. What was Israel forbidden to do with these descendants of Lot?—10. To what place did Israel journey east of the land of the Moabites?—11. What do you know about the Amorites, whose territory the Israelites now approached?—12. In what respect was the meeting between Israel and the Amorites portentous for the future?—13. What only did Israel ask of the Amorites?—14. How did Israel treat them when they opposed Israel?—15. The greatest part of what country thus came into Israel's possession?—16. What two-fold fact was Israel to learn from this clash with the Amorites?—17. We are not surprised

that Israel now sang hymns of war; where are samples to be found?—18. What direction did victorious Israel now follow?—19. What territory is meant by the "plains of Moab"?—20. What effect did the coming of victorious Israel have on Balak, the king of the Moabites?—21. In his fright whom did he call to help in order to destroy Israel?—22. Where did Balaam live?—23. Whose part would Balaam prone have taken?—24. What prevented him from doing so?—25. What may have moved Balak to call none but Balaam?—26. Why did Balaam at first refuse to go to Balak?—27. But how did it happen that later on he asked God whether or not he could go to Balak?—28. So God was to change his mind that Balaam could satisfy his avaricious desires; how is it to be explained that under these circumstances God permitted him to go?—29. What did God expressly impress on Balaam before he left?—30. What shows that Balaam was completely governed by his sinful desires?—31. And it was to be feared that they would lead him to do what?—32. What would have become of Balaam if he had cursed Israel contrary to God's will?—33. What was God in His great mercy moved to do in order to save Balaam from destruction?—34. In what way did the angel of the Lord meet Balaam?—35. How did it happen that Balaam failed to see the angel of the Lord?—36. What fact need only be recalled in order to understand that the ass saw the angel of the Lord?—37. What answer would you give them who make sport of the speaking of the ass, and thereby ridicule the whole Bible or at least a large portion of its contents?—38. Why was the speaking of the ass a well selected means to achieve the results God desired in Balaam?—39. In what respect did God achieve these results in Balaam?—40. How did Balaam, indeed, imitate the heathen augurs and conjurers?—41. What, however, did he really proclaim?—42. Upon what does he look in his first statement?—43. And what did he magnify in Israel's past?—44. What does the second statement speak of?—45. What did Balaam have to say of Israel in its present stage?—46. What does the third statement look forward to?—47. What did he say of Israel's immediate future?—48. What does the fourth statement speak of?—49. What did he behold in Israel's remote future?—50. In whom was this prophecy of Balaam fulfilled?—51. When shall Christ bring about the consummation of the prophecy?—52. How did Balak treat Balaam when he had finished his blessing over Israel?—53. In what way was the blessing of Balaam the best means of strengthening Israel's trust in God?—54. How did it happen that Balaam went without a blessing though he had prophesied a glorious future for Israel?—55. What was Israel's punishment for permitting themselves to be led into fornication with the daughters of the Moabites?—56. How were the Moabites and Balaam who caused the temptation punished?—57. For whom will Balaam ever stand as an example of warning?—58. Whose example, however, proves, that it always pays to champion the cause of the honor of God and the purity of the people?—59. Show that God kept His

promise!—60. Why were the men of military age numbered again in the plains of Moab?—61. What other regulations did God make in the plains of Moab to prepare everything for the conquest of the land west of the Jordan?—62. What only remained to be done now?—63. Where do we read that this was done?

The **fifth book of Mō'ses, Deū tēr on'ō my**, details Mō'ses' farewell from his people. He was Īs'rā el's liberator, leader, lawgiver, and mediator with God. He could not part from them without using every means of exhortation to keep them in communion with God. For this reason he reminded the people of the gracious history which under divine guidance they had been privileged to experience, so that in grateful love they would wholly and exclusively dedicate themselves to God. For this reason also he directs them to the future and shows them how God will seriously punish every transgression of His law, and richly reward true obedience. With prophetic eye Mō'ses foresees the people's defection, but also God's immeasurable grace, and dies with the praise of God on his lips, the God who chose Īs'rā el, made them His people, and will never entirely forsake them. The book of Deū tēr on'ō my was especially well adapted to open Īs'rā el's eyes, and show them the moral greatness of God, infinitely superior to any of the gods of the heathen peoples round about, and also show them the inner and spiritual character of the law which their God had given them. The book is divided into **two parts**, the **first** of which details the voluminous farewell addresses of Mō'ses to his people (chapters 1—30), the **second**, much shorter, reports the farewell proper and death of Mō'ses (chapters 31—34). It is called **Deū tēr on'ō my** (= second law) because it repeats the law given at Sī'nā i and during the journey through the wilderness.

1. **Moses' Farewell Addresses, Chapters 1—30.**

a) **The Opening Discourse, Deut. 1—4: 43.**—Read the entire section.

After the superscription (1:1—5) Moses reminds the people, how Jahve called them to conquer Canaan, and for this reason led them to Kadesh-Barnea (1:6—19), but how they rebelled against

Him in unbelief, and merited His wrath (1:20-46). Yet after the lapse of the 38 years of punishment He did not, indeed, give them Edom, Ammon, and Moab (2:1-23) but He put the kings of the Amorites, Sihon and Og, and their realms of Bashan and Gilead into their power (2:24-3:17) and made preparations for the conquest of the land of Canaan, which he (Moses) could not enter (3:18-29). For this reason the people should keep Jahve's covenant, worship no graven images nor any sidereal bodies, so as not again to kindle His wrath and be dispersed among the heathen, but rather remain in the land, although God will not forget His people to whom He has revealed Himself in extraordinary revelation, even though He must scatter them among the heathen as a punishment for their defection (4:1-43).

b) The Main Discourse, in which Moses Reviews the Whole of the Law and Impresses it upon the People. Deut. 4: 44-26: 19.—Read Deut. 6: 1-25; 7: 1-26; 8: 1-20; 10: 14-21; 11: 13-28; 12: 5-14; 15: 7-11; 15: 12-18; 18: 9-19; 24: 5; 24: 14-22.

After the introduction (4: 44-49) Moses reminds the people of the promulgation of the Ten Commandments at Sinai and the impression it made upon them (5: 1-33). Then he summarizes the whole law, 6: 4-5, under the two-fold demand, 1) **Israel must ever cling in faith to this fact that Jahve is the only God and Jahve who alone can help;** 2) **for this reason it must wholly dedicate itself to Him in love.** Moses could not have expressed himself with greater depth or more in accordance with the New Testament than he did, and Jesus many times cites these verses and regards them as the true fulfillment of the whole law (Mark 12: 29-30; Luke 10: 27-28). Moses places these words at the head of all individual commandments that follow as the theme for all, just as Luther always begins the explanation of the Ten Commandments with the same words, "We should fear and love God." With this he would say to Israel, Only then is the fulfillment of all other commandments possible and only then is it of value in the sight of God, when it comes forth from the faith in God as the true God and only Savior, and from the heartfelt love for Him. And everything that Moses has to say as he reviews the law, he groups about this central thought of love born out of faith in Jahve.

Love for God, says he, must manifest itself, 1) **in the honest clinging to Him as the only God and Lord.** For this reason Israel must exterminate the Canaanites with all their idolatry, so that these might not cause them to fall away from God (chapt. 7; note especially

7:7—8); for this reason, remembering the divine discipline and humiliation which they experienced in the wilderness (chapt. 8) and their repeated insurrections against God (9:1—10:11), they must beware of arrogance and self-righteousness, and not turn away from God, as they enjoy the rich treasures of Canaan, but rather permanently retain the blessings of God (especially 11:8—15) by a faithful maintenance of the covenant and a scrupulous and conscientious fulfillment of His commandments (10:12—11:32); for this reason they should seek the Lord and worship Him at that one place which He Himself will select to put His Name there, and not at any place which they might choose, least of all at such places, where the Canaanites worshipped their idols (12:1—14; Ex. 20:24); for this reason they must punish all and every one who would lead them to another service (18:1—10), keep themselves free from all sorcerers, diviners, clairvoyants, and self-appointed prophets (18:9—14), and only heed the prophets of the Lord, for the Lord will never permit His people to suffer for want of true prophets commissioned by God Himself, indeed, He will eventually send them a prophet like Moses, who will complete and perfect all revelation of God (18:15—22); in verses 18 and 19 God renews the prophecy given Adam and Eve in paradise (Gen. 3:15), renewed to Abraham (Gen. 12:2, 3), repeated through Jacob (Gen. 49:10), and brought back to memory by Balaam (Num. 24:17).—Israel's love for its God must, however, also become manifest, 2) **in love and mercy to the neighbor**, especially to the members of their own nation, delivered with them from the bondage of Egypt (comp. Lev. 19:18). That is the fundamental thought that pervades all ordinances found in chapters 19—25. We will spend no time on these, since most of them, especially in the form as given here, are no longer valid and were meant only for the Old Testament dispensation. We mention only 24:5 and 24:14—22 because of their humanitarian contents and their care of the poor (comp. also Deut. 15:1—18). Special mention should be made of the basic thought at the bottom of love and mercy for the neighbor. Of course the love for God must be its principal motive, yet also the remembrance of their own former distress in Egypt, and the thought, that the fellowman, like themselves, has been freed therefrom, must ever incite them to the true love for the neighbor (Deut. 24:18, 22; 15:15; 16:12). The same thought occurs in the New Testament, namely that Christian brotherly love and love of neighbor in general should be fostered by us for this reason also, that the Christian brother and every fellowman has been redeemed with us through Christ. He whom God has redeemed I

dare not hate, to him I dare not show myself hard of heart and unmerciful.

Questions:—1. To what extent does the book of Genesis tell the sacred story of what occurred between God and man?—2. To what extent does the book of Exodus?—3. What is the contents of the book of Leviticus?—4. What does the book of Numbers with its three parts relate?—5. What does the book of Deuteronomy tell about?—6. What had Moses been for Israel during the past forty years?—7. What should he therefore do now for the people before his departure?—8. How many admonitions did he urge on them?—9. What was the first one?—10. What the second?—11. And what the third?—12. Where are Moses' farewell addresses recorded?—13. To what especially should Israel's eye have been opened by these farewell addresses?—14. How large a part of Deuteronomy do the farewell addresses cover?—15. What does the second and shorter part relate?—16. Why is it called Deuteronomy?—17. How far does the opening discourse extend?—18. Of what facts does Moses remind Israel at the outset in the opening discourse?—19. How does he then admonish them in view of the grace of God so richly experienced?—20. If the people would forsake God and worship strange gods, what would be the result?—21. From the past Moses turns to the present and reviews the law in impressive manner; how far does the second or main discourse extend?—22. In what two-fold demand does Moses summarize the whole of the law?—23. Where did Jesus declare that in this two-fold demand the whole of the law is contained?—24. What did Moses wish to say to Israel when he placed this two-fold demand at the beginning of all other laws?—25. Around what did Moses group everything he had to say in his extended review of the law?—26. Wherein, does he say, must the love of God manifest itself?—27. Enumerate the four chief acts of compliance that Moses in chapt. 7—18 demands of all in Israel who would regard Him alone as God and heartily love Him!—28. At what place only was Israel to worship God?—29. And whom only were they to give heed to?—30. Whom did God promise to send them if they would heed none but His prophets?—31. What promise was renewed with these words?—32. In what was Israel's love of God to manifest itself further?—33. Whom had Moses in mind when he spoke of the neighbor?—34. This restriction of love to members of the nation shows the narrow confines of the Mosaic law; in what chapters does Moses show in detail how this love for their neighbor is to manifest itself?—35. What thought do we meet with in chapter 24 especially, which is exemplary for all law-giving?—36. What thought however, deserves special mention among all these ordinances?—37. That is a New Testament thought; what, do we find, is to support this principal motive for the fulfillment of the law?—38. Show that this, too, is a New Testament sentiment!

c) **The Third Discourse sets forth the Blessing put by God upon Obedience, as a Reward, and the Curse as a Punishment for Transgression, Chapters 27—30.**—Read Deut. 27:1—8, 26; 28:1—53; 28:58—68; 30:1—10; 30:11—20.

Here Moses first of all orders that after its entrance into Canaan Israel should erect large stones covered with plaster on Mount Ebal and write the law of the Lord, i. e., the most important parts of it, upon them, so as unmistakably to set forth, that no law is valid in this land except the law of the Lord (27:1—8). And then in order that the whole people might solemnly confess its allegiance to the law, fear its curse and seek its blessings, both the blessings and the curse of the law should be solemnly proclaimed from the summits of Mounts **Ebal** and **Gerizim** and the people should recognize the curse by repeatedly saying "Amen" (i. e., this is most certainly true) (27:11—26). Thus in word and deed everything should be done which could in any way help indelibly to impress the sanctity of the law upon the minds of the people. Parents should impress it upon the minds of their children in the homes, and speak of it by day and by night (Deut. 6:6—9; 11:18, 19; to write them upon the door posts of the houses and upon the gates and to bind them for a sign upon the hands and as frontlets between the eyes is metaphorical language. Its meaning is that they should ever and always have them before their mind's eye). In the tabernacle it should be placed in the ark as a testimony against Israel's transgressions. All over the land it should be posted in public places to be read by all; it should be proclaimed from Ebal and Gerizim, indeed, every seventh year the whole law should be read in the hearing of all (Deut. 31:10—13), so that no man should excuse himself and say, he did not know the law. Ebal and Gerizim were situated in the geographical center of the land directly opposite each other (Ebal north and Gerizim south of Shechem). For this reason they were especially well adapted for the public proclamation of both the blessing and the curse valid for the whole land. What the **blessing** included for him who obeyed the law is described in detail in 28:1—14; and 28:15—68 describes the **curse** hurled at every one in Israel who transgresses the law. Both are included in the words Ex. 20:5, 6, or in the verse, "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). Moses put both the blessing and the curse before the people in this dramatic way because he hoped thereby the better to encourage a true obedience. And he spoke much more in detail of the curse than of the blessing because he knew the obstinacy of his people and realized its inclination to

disobedience. Even the **dispersion among all nations** and a restless existence with trembling hearts and failing eyes and sorrowing mind (verse 65) is put before them as a punishment for disobedience (verses 64—68). Thus his glance pierced the ages to the present day, where as a matter of fact, the Jews are scattered among all nations of the globe and the noblest among them, who still cling to the Old Testament, live a life without peace with God and with desires that are not satisfied. The basic thoughts of this 28th chapter are so important for the life and happiness of every people that they should be posted in all schools and courts of justice to be seen by all. As the covenant was made with God at Sinai at the first proclamation of the law, Moses now calls upon the people in the course of his address, and after reviewing the law on their part to **renew the covenant with God** (29: 9—24), he again directs their attention to the punishment attendant upon defection (29: 15—28). But he also promises them that they will **again be received** and gathered together from the dispersion, when they truly and in their heart return to God (30: 1—10).—Thus Moses spoke to them as a father speaks to his children and from ever new angles sought to find a new approach to their hearts and show them the grandeur and importance of the law. Surely no one in Israel could justify himself by saying, that God's will had not been made known to him (30: 11—14). Moses had proclaimed the law to all, held up both the blessing and the curse, so that they might prove obedient and thus chose the blessing and life (30: 15—20). Moses could not have spoken to them more heartily and impressively than he did in these first thirty chapters of Deuteronomy.

2. **Moses' Farewell and Death.** Chapters 31—34.—Read Deut. 31: 1—8; 31: 8—13; 32: 1—43; 33: 1—29; 34: 1—12.

The repetition of the law (chapters 1—30) marks the most important part of the work that remained for Moses to do prior to his departure. Now the time had come for his death. He himself informed the people that he would now die, and that Joshua would lead them into Canaan in his stead, and in the presence of the whole people he encouraged him to discharge this great duty (31: 1—8). He put the law which he had just received for Israel down in writing and gave it to the priests, to place it into the ark of the covenant (31: 9), and every seven years to read it in public (31: 10—13). At the command of God (31: 19) he also composed a **hymn** on the unchangeable fidelity of the Lord over against the obstinacy of the unfaithful people. This hymn (chapter 32) does not go beyond that said by him before, but it briefly summarizes his entire testimony of the faithfulness of God and

the **unfaithfulness** of the people, so that the latter could commit it to memory and thus at all times be chided, exhorted, and comforted (31:19). It forms the basis for all future prophecy.—As a father loves to bless his children prior to his death, thus Moses finally **blessed** all the tribes of Israel (chapt. 33). His thoughts went back to Jacob's blessing on his sons (Gen. 49) and in spirit he already foresaw their whole future development. He informed Judah that God would make him the ruler over Israel (verse 7). Next to Judah he especially distinguished Levi. The tribe of Levi should serve the people as the priest and teacher of the law, because at the time when Israel grievously sinned by worshipping the golden calf, this tribe put itself entirely on the side of Jahve, and relentlessly destroyed all who fell into this idolatry (verses 8—11; comp. Ex. 32:26—29, page 132). With his eye upon the wonderful and unique lot of the elect people and the conquering power of his God, Moses concluded his blessing (verses 28—29). His life's work had not been in vain after all.

Such was the blessing with which Moses took leave from the people, for whom he had been liberator, lawgiver, and prophet, and at the command of God ascended **Mt. Nebo** (Deut. 32:48—52), the highest peak of the plateau of Pisgah (34:1). This peak affords a wide view over the whole country. And here God permitted him, no doubt strengthening his vision for this purpose, to view the greater part of the promised land. Though he was destined not to enter because of his sin at the waters of strife (page 151) yet his heart should be gladdened by this sight. But now after he had experienced this distinction he **died** on Mt. Nebo, in the land of Moab, outside of Canaan, and the Lord Himself interred him "in the land of the valley, over against Bethpeor" (verse 6), i. e., in a valley in the vicinity of Nebo.

If we ask, where did Israel get the knowledge of the happenings on Mt. Nebo, the answer is, the Lord Himself, undoubtedly, revealed them to Joshua, Moses' successor, and he under divine guidance added them to Moses' record. The fact that the Lord Himself **buried** Moses and no man ever (verse 6) discovered his grave is well in line with the relation which the Lord took to Moses during the latter's lifetime. On account of his sins, Moses, too, was forced to die like all other men, a remarkable example of God's hatred of sin; but after God's righteousness had thus been appeased by this punishment, Moses should again be distinguished before all people as the one who was found faithful, whom the Lord knew face to face, and with

whom He had spoken mouth to mouth (Deut. 34:10; Num. 12:7, 8), and, therefore, he was buried by the Lord Himself. How the Lord buried Moses is another question. Hardly in any other way than that He translated him into the glorified state. Men bury and decomposition follows; if God's burial forms the opposite and a distinction, then it must have consisted in the fact that He kept the corpse from decomposition and translated Moses, body and soul, into heaven. This burial would thus be put on a level with the taking away of Enoch (Gen. 5:24), and the translation of Elijah (2 Kings 2:9). This would also be in line with the fact that on the mount of Transfiguration not only Elijah but also Moses appeared as a messenger of the eternal realm (Matth. 17:3). It would also explain Jude 9, for then this passage is only an expansion of what really transpired on Nebo: since Moses had sinned, Satan had claim against him, but the Lord through His angel prohibits him from extending it to Moses' body. He could lead him to death, but in spite of death he can not bring Moses into his possession. Moses belongs to God and God takes him to Himself.

Questions:—1. How far did the opening discourse extend with which Moses introduced the repetition of the law in Deuteronomy?—2. In what chapters is the main discourse recorded?—3. What is the contents of the final discourse in chapt. 27—30?—4. What was the people to do on Mt. Ebal after their entrance into Canaan?—5. What was the purpose of the stones on which the law was written?—6. What was then solemnly to be proclaimed from Mounts Ebal and Gerizim?—7. For what purpose was that to be done?—8. What further orders did Moses give that old and young might surely become acquainted with God's law?—9. Why were Mounts Ebal and Gerizim especially adapted for the public proclamation of both the blessing and the curse?—10. Where is the blessing described that should come upon Israel if it obeyed the law?—11. And where the curse that is hurled at transgressors?—12. In what word are both briefly comprehended?—13. Why did Moses put both the blessing and the curse before the people in such a dramatic way?—14. Why did he speak much more in detail of the curse?—15. What punishment even did he foretell here?—16. In what way does his prophetic eye thus behold the present time?—17. How does Moses now call upon the people as he nears the end of his discourse?—18. In case the people depart from God, but afterwards return in true repentance, what does Moses promise them?—19. After such a detailed review of the law, what excuse could no one have?—20. Nor could anyone complain that the law had not been presented to them in a friendly way, for in all his discourses how did Moses speak with them?—21. What does the second and shorter part of Deuteronomy relate?—22. Enumerate

the five acts that Moses now did before his departure!—23. Where was the book containing his discourses on the law to be kept?—24. What were the priests to do with it every seven years?—25. What does the hymn treat of that Moses composed and that can be read in chapt. 32?—26. What significance attaches to this hymn compared to the later prophecy?—27. Why may Moses have composed this testimony to God's faithfulness and Israel's unfaithfulness in the form of a hymn?—28. Since Moses had always been as a father to Israel what fatherly act did he perform just before his death?—29. To whose blessing did his thoughts go back?—30. And what did he tell the tribes of Israel even as Jacob did his sons?—31. What did he tell Judah?—32. What double task did he impose on the tribe of Levi?—33. Upon what did his eye rest as he concluded his blessing?—34. Where did Moses now go after he had blessed Israel?—35. What did the Lord show him there?—36. What happened then?—37. Who buried him?—38. How do you explain the statement that God buried Moses?—39. Show how well this explanation agrees with what we read in Matth. 17:3!—40. Show, too, how it explains Jude 9!—41. Why did God so distinguish Moses that He took him to Himself in heaven, keeping his body from decomposition?—42. How old was Moses when he died?—43. In what respect did age have no effect upon him?—44. How did Israel show that it realized to some extent what loss it had sustained in the death of Moses?—45. Who may have realized this most fully?

* * *

Before we leave the five books of Moses we append a **SHORT SUMMARY OF THE LAW** given by Moses to the people of Israel at divers times (especially at Mount Sinai and on the plains of Moab) and recorded in different parts of his books from Exodus to Deuteronomy.

The Mosaic law is usually divided into three parts: 1) the moral law, 2) the civil law, 3) the ceremonial law. In all three parts it is the same God who has given the law, and the transgression of any provision of the civil or ceremonial law was for the Israelite just as much a sin against God as the transgression of any provision of the moral code, and was equally subject to divine punishment. Sometimes the penalty attached to the transgression of a ceremonial provision was even harsher than that attached to disobedience against the moral code (comp. the laws relating to the violation of Sabbath, or the eating of blood, Ex. 31:14; 17:10-14). The difference therefore between these three parts of the law was not a matter of a greater or lesser degree of holiness, as though the moral was more sacred than the civil or ceremonial code. The word: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do

them" (Deut. 27:26) pertains to all these. No, the difference depended entirely upon the sphere in which Israel should manifest its obedience. The moral law included everything that pertained to the immediate relation to God and fellowman put at man's side by God. The civil law governed all matters pertaining to the state and government, so that Israel was a state in which God Himself was king. And the ceremonial law regulated all matters pertaining to worship.

The **MORAL LAW** can be summarized in the one demand of love to God and the neighbor (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18 [comp. Lev. 19:34]). Jesus says, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matth. 22:37-40). The Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:6-21) are a summary of the moral law, though something of the civil law is here added. The promise added to the fourth commandment, for instance, (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16) pertains to the land of Canaan, in which God dwells among His people as their king. Phases of the ceremonial law are also added, for the third commandment in the form as given by Moses (Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15) belongs entirely to the ceremonial code.

On the other hand there are some regulations that belong to the sphere of the moral law, which are not mentioned in the Ten Commandments; for instance, the degrees of affinity in which no marriage should take place. It was expressly forbidden in the law, and the death penalty was imposed on marriage with the mother, the step-mother; the niece, the step-niece, the step-daughter, the daughter-in-law, the mother-in-law, the sister, the step-sister. Barrenness was the punishment for marriage with the aunt, the uncle's widow, the brother's wife, if she was the mother of living children, and with two sisters simultaneously. While the law prohibited marriage with the brother's widow, if she was the mother of living children, it made marriage with the brother's widow, if she was childless, a duty (Deut. 25:5-10). This was called a Levirate marriage. The first born son of such a marriage was regarded as the son of the deceased, that his generation might not become extinct.

The **CIVIL LAW** includes all the ordinances resulting from the basic thought, that Israel unlike all other nations is the people of God, for whom God Himself has conquered Canaan as their patrimony after their deliverance from Egypt, and in whose midst God will dwell as the only Lord and King (Ex. 15:17-18; 19:5; Deut. 4:20; Lev. 26:12; 29:13; Deut. 7:6; 14:2; Ex. 4:22). Thus the entire land should belong to God, and every Israelite should receive his portion from God and for this reason could not dispose of it as he liked (Lev.

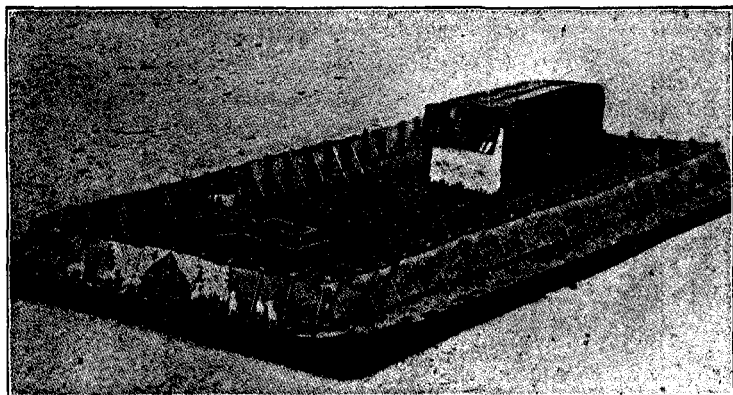
27:28; 1 Kings 21:3). Thus also the products of the land peculiarly belonged to God, and for this reason at least the tenth part must be delivered to Him (Lev. 27:30 and the following; Num. 18:21, 24; Deut. 14:22 and the following); for this reason God claimed the first born both in man and beast (Ex. 13:11—14) and freed them only on payment of a price (Ex. 34:19, 20). Thus also parents were regarded as the representatives of God and obtained their power over the family from God, so that any one who cursed his parents or injured them bodily was punished with death by the government (Ex. 21:17; Lev. 20:9; Ex. 21:15). A son, who continued in his disobedience, though admonished, was stoned (Deut. 21:18 and the following). On the other hand obedience towards parents entailed blessing and long life (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16). Thus also judges and government officers were looked upon as representatives of God. They judged and passed sentence not in the name of the people but in the name of God. To stand before a judge was equivalent to standing before the Lord (Deut. 19:17), and the judges are directly called gods" (Ex. 22:28; comp. Ps. 82:6). And even in case the people should demand a visible, human king, he should be appointed by God and only live and rule according to the divine law (Deut. 17:14—20). Prophets should proclaim the will of God and for this reason could demand obedience (Deut. 18:15—19). In special cases God Himself would decide by the casting of lots (Lev. 16:8, following; Num. 26:55, following), or through His Urim and Thummim (Ex. 28:30; Lev. 8:8; Num. 27:21), which may have been something similar to the casting of lots. The entire life of the Israelite down to the minutest detail was regulated by divine commandments. One principle stands forth especially concerning all individual provisions, namely that all men are equal before the law, for there is but one law for all alike, the highest and the lowest (comp. Ex. 23:1—3, 8), the provisions made for the poor, for widows and orphans (Ex. 23:6, 9, 11; Lev. 19:9, 10, 23, 22; Deut. 24:17—22) mercy for slaves of both sexes (Deut. 15:12—18), special privileges for the newly wedded (Deut. 20:5—7), for day laborers (Lev. 19:13; compare also Lev. 19:18; Deut. 22:8, 23, 25, and following). Even the care of beasts and animals is not forgotten (Ex. 20:10; 23:11, and the following; Deut. 22:4, 6, and the following). It would indeed be foolish to transfer these individual provisions, unchanged, into our modern code of laws; still, if the people of all ages had paid more attention to the principles that govern these provisions, much unrest and strife would have been spared them. (Ex. 20:14) It is the image of God

Questions:—1. In what books is the Mosaic law to be found?—2. Which one of the four books commands special attention?—3. Into what three parts do we usually divide the Mosaic law?—4. But how is this division not to be construed?—5. What statement applies to all parts, to the civil and ceremonial no less than to the moral law?—6. What, then, constitutes the difference between the three parts, if one is to be kept as sacredly as the other?—7. What was included in the moral law?—8. What did the civil law govern?—9. What was regulated by the ceremonial law?—10. In what demand can you summarize the moral law?—11. Where do we find the chief elements of the moral law?—12. Show that in the Ten Commandments regulations of the civil and ceremonial law are also contained!—13. Enumerate some laws that are part of the moral law, but are given apart from the decalogue!—14. The marriage of what persons was forbidden in the law, and the death penalty imposed?—15. For what marriage was barrenness to be the punishment?—16. What is a Levirate marriage?—17. How was the first born son of a Levirate marriage to be regarded?—18. What basic thought permeates all the regulations of the civil law?—19. What, therefore, was an Israelite not allowed to do with his property?—20. What, therefore, was to be done with the tenth part of all the products of the land?—21. To whom, therefore, did all the firstborn both in man and beast belong?—22. In what way only could Israel have them released?—23. Who were regarded as the representatives of God on earth?—24. What penalty was fixed for those who cursed their parents, or injured them in their body, or who continued in disobedience toward them?—25. In whose name then did the judges pass sentence, if they too were regarded as the representatives of God?—26. What were the judges of Israel often called because they were the representatives of God?—27. Who alone was allowed to appoint a visible, human king in order that it might be well understood that God is King and any other only His representative?—28. Whose law was the king to follow exclusively?—29. What only were the prophets allowed to do, because God was to rule as King in Israel?—30. How did God propose to cast decisions in special cases in order that Israel might clearly see that God is king in Israel, and that His will is to rule in all things?—31. What principle pertaining to all the individual provisions of this law stands forth most prominently?—32. What indeed is impossible regarding the individual provisions of the Mosaic Law?—33. What, however, should the nations have transferred from the Mosaic civil law to their own code of laws?

The greatest amount of space is accorded the **CEREMONIAL CODE**. Here must be noted the ordinances concerning:

A. The **NATIONAL SANCTUARY** or the **TABERNACLE** (tent of meeting, comp. page 138, tent of testimony) Ex. 26:27 and 36. Israel must make no graven image of God (Ex. 20:4, 5). God

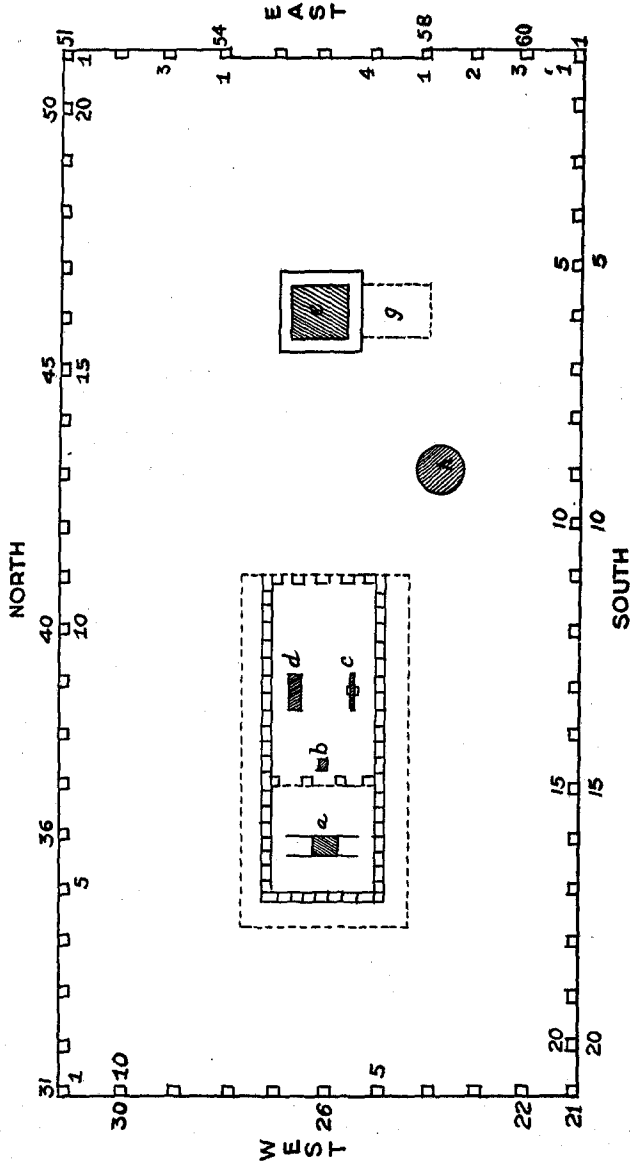
Himself will dwell in their midst (Ex. 25:8), see page 137. All public worship, especially the sacrifice, was bound to the tabernacle, later to the temple which superseded it (Ex. 20:24; Deut. 12:1—7). The tabernacle was constructed from the voluntary gifts of the people (see page 130) according to the plan furnished by God



Tabernacle With Court

for Moses (Ex. 25:40; 26:30) and was built and dedicated on the first day of the second year of the journey through the wilderness (Ex. 40). Since Israel was on the march the tabernacle could be no permanent building. It was a large tent, that could be erected or taken down as conditions demanded. For this reason it consisted for the greater part of carpets stretched over a scaffold of wood. The innermost layer consisted of a texture woven from the finest white byssus, blue and purple and scarlet, and embroidered with the figures of cherubim. The second layer was woven of goats hair spun into threads. The third consisted of the red skins of rams, the fourth of the hides of badgers. Its inside dimensions were 30 by 10 ells (45x15 feet). On the inside it was divided into two compartments, the Holy in front, 20 ells in length, and the Most Holy or the Holy of Holies, 10 ells in length. These two compartments were separated from each other by a heavy curtain of the same texture and color as the covering of cherubim cloth. Outside of this main structure was the court.

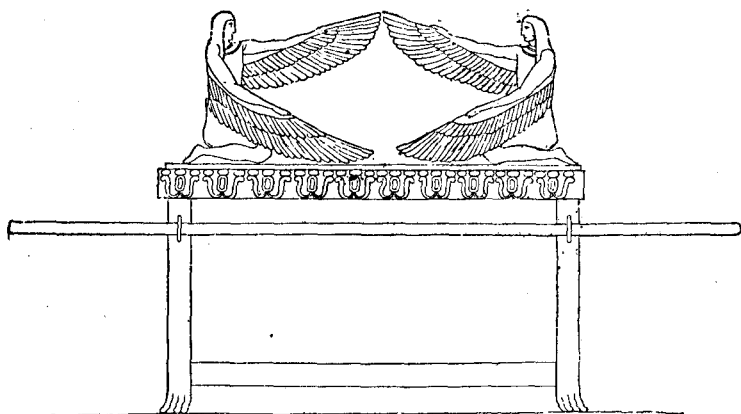
1. The **Most Holy** or **Holy of Holies** was a room kept completely dark, 10 ells (= 15 feet) in length, entered only once a year by the



Plan of Tabernacle With Court

a. Ark. b. Altar of Incense. c. Golden Candlestick. d. Table of Shew Bread. e. Altar of Burnt Offering. g. Approach to Altar of Burnt Offering. h. Laver.

high priest (on the great day of atonement). Even though the glory of the Lord filled the entire tabernacle (Ex. 40:34) on the day of the dedication, yet the Most Holy was looked upon especially as the dwelling place of the Lord. In this Most Holy the ark of the covenant was kept, also called the ark of testimony or the ark of God. It was a chest, $2\frac{1}{2}$ ells in width, covered with gold on the inside and outside, and ornamented on top with a wreath of gold running along the outer edge. The cover of the ark was a plate of fine gold, of the same length and width as the ark. Two figures of angels (cherubim) stood on the cover (Ex. 25:10–22; 37:1–15). Underneath the cover



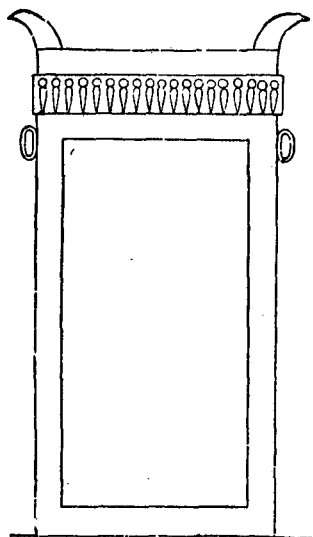
Ark With Cherubim

the two tables of the law (hence ark of testimony) were kept, the jar with manna, Aaron's rod, and later also Moses' tables of testimony (Ex. 25:21; 40:20; 16:33, 34; Num. 17:10; Hebr. 9:4; Deut. 31:24–26). They imagined God as sitting above the cherubim, His feet resting upon the cover of the ark, so that in a way this was the footstool of God and the whole represented His throne (hence Luther translated the word for "cover of the ark" with mercy seat, "Gnadenstuhl"). It was the place of the gracious presence of God. This gracious presence of God was also symbolized by the cherubim. It was here where the high priest brought the blood of the sacrifice on the great day of atonement and sprinkled it on the cover of the ark. The tables of the law of Israel preserved in the ark might then accuse the people before God on account of their transgressions, but as soon

as the blood was put between the law and God, sin was looked upon as covered up and cancelled (Lev. 16:15, 16; 17:11).

2. **The Holy Place** was of equal height and width as the Most Holy, but again as long, namely 20 ells or 30 feet. The walls here, too, were covered with gold plate on the inside and outside. Here the altar of incense stood, the table of shewbread, and the seven-armed golden candlestick. While the Most Holy was entered only once a year by the high priest, the Holy Place was the place of the regular daily service of the priests. The **Altar of Incense** was made of the wood of the acacia, two ells in height and one in length and breadth (Ex. 30:1 and the following; 37:22 and the following). Its upper corners were ornamented with four golden horns, and a golden wreath ran around the top as an ornament. It faced the ark in the Holy of Holies, separated from this only by a curtain or veil. For this reason it was also called the "altar which is before the Lord" (Lev. 4:18; 16:18). The oriental is a lover of pleasant odors and perfumes (Prov. 27:9), especially those produced by the burning of odorous substances, which serves to intensify the odor. In order to honor and gladden a person it was customary to perfume the room which he entered with pleasant odors, his clothes when he came and went, and his long and waving beard. For this reason the garments of the bridegroom in Ps. 45:8 are named after the precious substances with which they were perfumed, myrrh, aloes, and cassia, and in Solomon's Song 3:6 the bride is likened to odorous substances, because her garments are perfumed with these. These odorous substances in the form of powders were poured on glowing coals, and the clouds of perfume produced thereby were permitted to rise into the garments, etc. And as men thus gladdened and honored each other with odorous substances they would also do to God. Thus the burning of incense as a part of worship is found alike among heathen and Jews (2 Kings 17:11; Lev. 2:1, 2; 6:15; 10:1; 16:12, 13; Luke 1:8, 9). Incense was burnt on the altar of incense twice each day, morning and evening, following the burnt offering. One of the priests took coals from the altar of burnt offering, carried them in the censer, i. e., the golden vessel used for this purpose, from the Court of the Priests into the Holy Place and spread them on the altar of incense, worshipped, and withdrew. Then another priest brought incense in a vessel and arranged it over the coals, so that it burned and a fine vapor ascended. He also worshipped and withdrew. Incense consisted of a powder prepared from three kinds of sweet spices and the shell of a certain kind of gastropod or mollusk (onycha) (Ex. 30:

24—38). The incense offering had a two-fold meaning: 1) it was an offering to honor God; 2) it was a symbol of prayer. Just as the odorous vapor ascended to God, the soul also should lift itself up to



Altar of Incense.

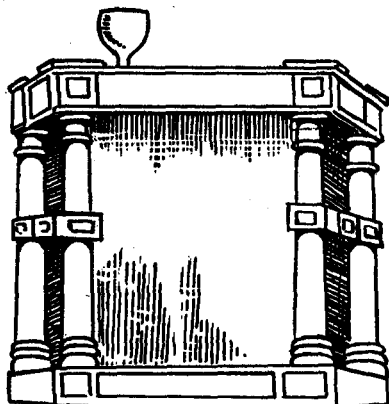
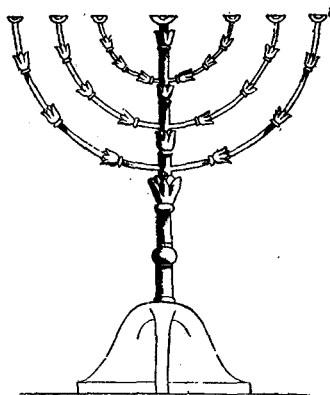


Table of Shewbread.



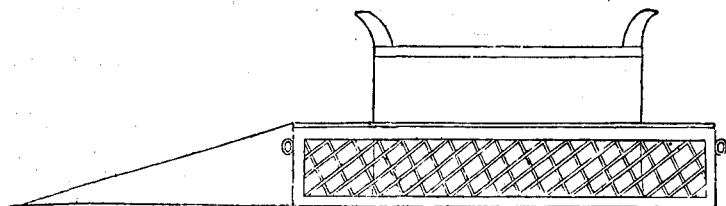
Golden Candlestick.

God, especially in the morning and evening. For this reason not only the priest worshipped and prayed after the burning of the incense, but later we also find the people assembled in the Court for worship and prayer (Luke 1:10); comp. Ps. 141:2 and what Deut. 16:46 says about special incense offerings for the purpose of inter-

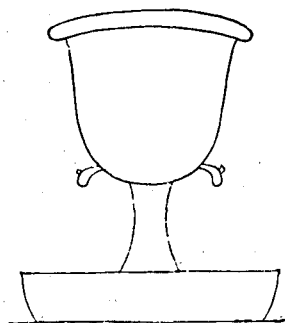
cession for the sin-stained people.—The **Table of Shewbread** or “the table of the face,” was placed about in the center of the northern side of the Holy Place to the left of the altar of burnt offering, being ranged lengthways of the Temple, and like the altar of burnt offering, was made of the wood of acacia, 2 ells in length, 1 ell in width, and 1½ ells in height, and covered with gold plate (Ex. 25:23—30; 37:10—16). It received its name from the shewbread or “bread of the face” placed there. The shewbread consisted of 12 loaves of bread, according to the 12 tribes of Israel, baked of the finest wheat flour, about of the thickness of a finger (Lev. 24:5—9). They were placed each Sabbath, when still fresh and warm, and remained during the week, “before the face of the Lord” (hence “bread of the face”), to symbolize the fact, that Israel owes its daily bread to the Lord. At the end of the week they were removed and given to the priests, who alone dared to consume them, and then only in the Court (Lev. 24:9; comp. 1. Sam. 21:2—7). At a later time vessels filled with wine were probably placed next to the vessels with bread. (Our illustration shows the table of shewbread, as it was shown in Titus’ triumphant entry into Rome after the fall of Jerusalem.) As Israel by the placing of the table of the shewbread expressed symbolically that it owed its sustenance to none other than God, thus it also with its seven-armed **golden candlestick** confessed (Ex. 25:31—39; 37:17—24), that it received all true light, i. e., its intellectual and spiritual light from God (Ps. 36:9). For this reason originally it burned day and night, not only during the night, and not only when the priest required a light to perform his functions in the dark apartment. The golden candlestick was placed opposite the table of shew bread, about in the center of the southern side of the Holy Place. (The illustration shows the candlestick as it also was shown in Titus’ triumph at Rome after the fall of Jerusalem.) Only priests were admitted to the Holy Place, for the people could not commune with God directly but only mediately through the priests. A heavy curtain or veil concealed the Holy Place from view. The people remained in the Court.

3. The **Court** which enclosed the tabernacle, i. e., the Holy and Most Holy Place, on all sides and stretched out especially in an eastern direction was 100 ells in length and 50 ells in width (approximately 150x75 feet). The enclosure (picture on page 173) was formed by a curtain of white byssus, fastened to 60 pillars or stakes of wood, 6 ells in height, and 5 feet apart. These pillars rested in brazen pedestals and were topped off with capitals of silver. In the eastern quadrangle of this enclosure (50x50 ells) and under the open sky stood

the altar of burnt offering and the laver. The entrance to the Court on the east side was formed by a curtain. The entire sanctuary (tabernacle) together with the court was always placed so that the entrance was on the east side and the Most Holy Place on the west. —The **Altar of Burnt Offering** was a rectangular structure built of acacia wood, 3 ells high, and 5 ells square ($4\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ feet), filled with earth or stones. The woodwork was covered with brass. The four corners were adorned with horns cast solid with the brass cov-



Altar of Burnt Offering.



Laver.

ering. The horns had a special meaning. They were not only reminders of the fact that animals were here usually sacrificed, but they also symbolized the strength of the protection and the blessing which men receive from God through the sacrifice. For this reason they were always sprinkled or overspread with the sacrificial blood (Ps. 18:2; Ezek. 29:21; Ps. 132:17; Luke 1:69; comp. 1 Kings 1:50—53; Ex. 21:14; 1 Kings 2:28—30). Halfway to the top a circuit had been constructed resting on a brass railing (Ex. 38:1—7). On this the priests stood when they performed their duties. Instead of steps an inclined walk led to the circuit about the altar. The ves-

sels necessary for the sacrifices (a dish to receive the blood, shovels and pans for the ashes, pots and forks or flesh-hooks) were also made of brass. The name "altar of burnt offering" was given it, because all kinds of sacrifices, especially the burnt offerings (called thus because it was burned; comp. sacrifices below), were here offered. According to Lev. 6:12, the fire was never to be extinguished.—The **Laver**, on one side of the entrance into the Holy Place, was a large round basin of brass, used by the priests for washing both feet and hands prior to the sacrifices or entering the Holy Place. Comp. Ex. 40:1-33, for this whole chapter.—

Questions:—1. Into how many parts may we divide the Mosaic law?—2. With what does the moral law concern itself?—3. In what demand can you summarize the whole contents of it?—4. With what does the civil law concern itself?—5. What basic thought governs all the regulations of the civil law?—6. With what does the ceremonial law concern itself?—7. Under what four subjects can we classify all the provisions of the civil law?—8. What was the religious center in Israel?—9. Why was the tabernacle so regarded?—10. What may be the proper translation of the Hebrew word for tabernacle?—11. In what respect was the name well chosen, though Israel never congregated in the tabernacle as we do in our churches? (compare page 173.)—12. According to whose plan was the tabernacle built?—13. From whose gifts?—14. How are we to picture the tabernacle to ourselves?—15. Of what did the materials of this tent consist?—16. What were the dimensions of the tabernacle?—17. What two compartments did it contain?—18. What was the length of the Holy Place?—19. And what the length of the Holy of Holies?—20. What separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place?—21. By what were both parts surrounded?—22. What part of the tabernacle was especially regarded as the dwelling of God where He was present to His people?—23. What can you tell me of the dimensions and the illumination of the Most Holy?—24. What was placed in the Holy of Holies?—25. Describe the ark of the covenant!—26. What stood on the cover of the ark?—27. What was kept under the cover of the ark?—28. Who was conceived as sitting above the cherubim?—29. What was the cover often called?—30. Who only was permitted to enter the Holy of Holies?—31. How often in a year? When? For what purpose?—32. What did it signify when he sprinkled the blood on the cover of the ark?—33. What were the dimensions of the Holy Place?—34. What stood in the Holy Place?—35. For what purposes was the Holy Place used?—36. The burning of incense was part of the daily service; describe the altar of incense!—37. Tell of the important role that the burning of incense plays in Eastern life and customs!—38. Describe the priest's performance at the daily burning of incense in the temple!—39. What was the two-fold meaning of the incense-

offering?—40. What clearly shows that the daily incense offering in the morning and evening was a symbol of prayer?—41. Describe the table of shew-bread!—42. Whence was the name derived?—43. What would Israel confess by placing the table of shewbread in the Holy Place, and renewing the shewbread each Sabbath?—44. What was the significance of the golden candlestick?—45. Who only were permitted to enter the Holy Place?—46. Where did the people remain?—47. What separated the Court from the Holy Place?—48. How far did the Court extend?—49. How was the enclosure formed?—50. Since there was no roof to the enclosure, what stood under the open sky in the Court?—51. Describe the altar of burnt-offering!—52. What was the special meaning of the horns of the altar of burnt-offering?—53. What was therefore always spread over these horns?—54. What was constructed half-way up to the top of the altar of burnt-offering?—55. Why was this circuit necessary?—56. What vessels were necessary for the sacrifice?—57. Why was the altar called the altar of burnt-offering?—58. What else was placed in the Court?—59. Describe the laver!—60. For what purpose was it used?

B. THE SERVANTS OF THE SANCTUARY. God had selected the tribe of Levi for special service at the sanctuary, Num. 3 and 4; Deut. 33: 9—10; comp. pages 133 and 140. It was to be God's representative over against the people. For this reason the people were to tithe and bring to it all firstborn and a tenth of all income; and for this reason it received a part of all offerings (Num. 5: 8—10; 18: 31 following, 31: 29; Ex. 29: 27, 28; 25: 3; Lev. 7: 34; 10: 14). Forty-eight cities were given the Levites as places of residence. Of these, 6 were cities of refuge (Num. 35: 6; comp. page 159). But for **priestly service** proper, i. e., for service at the altar in the Court and for service "behind the veil" or curtain, i. e., in the Holy Place, only the house of Aaron was called (Ex. 28: 1; Lev. 9: 1—24; Lev. 3 and 4; Num. 18: 2—7; comp. page 140). Whereas the other Levites took down and again put up the tabernacle with its vessels, encamped about the tabernacle in the camp (Num. 1: 50 following), slaughtered the sacrifices in place of the people, Ezek. 44: 11, and in general assisted the priests (comp. 1 Chron. 23: 28 following). From the house of Aaron the **high priest** arose, Aaron himself being the first incumbent of this office, and the honor became hereditary with the firstborn son (Ex. 28 and 29). As a matter of fact the office remained with the family of Aaron down to the time of Herod the Great (nearly 1500 years), and here with a short interruption in the family of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, who followed him after his death (Num. 20: 28; comp. page 158). It was the office of the priests to sanctify the people

before God and keep them holy, Ex. 28:38. According to the command of God this was to be done in a two-fold way:

1. **By offering the sacrifice**, for by receiving the blood of sacrifices, sprinkling it over the lower part of the altar of burnt offering, its horns or the horns of the altar of incense, and the veil or curtain of the Most Holy Place, on the great day of Atonement also over the ark of the covenant, Israel's sin was to be atoned, i. e., regarded as covered or extinguished before God, so that God would now no longer punish the people because of it, nor put it out of His communion (for inst. Lev. 4:1—20; 5:16, 18; 16:16, 17; comp. Num. 16:46—48). The offering of the unbloody sacrifices also formed a part of their service (Lev. 2:1—16); the wave offering (i. e., the horizontal waving to and fro of the sacrifices before the altar) Lev. 14:24; the offering of everything that came to the altar, and the igniting of the parts that were to be burned; the lighting of the incense morning and evening; the cleansing of the lamps of the golden candlestick and keeping it supplied with oil; the weekly placing of the loaves of shewbread; keeping the fires of the altar of burnt offering burning; the daily taking away of the ashes; the guarding of the inner section of the temple at night; the estimation and valuation of gifts vowed to the temple (Lev. 27); the blowing of the metal trumpets at stated times (Num. 10:8), etc. Especially deserving of mention is the **prayer** which the priest offered for himself and for the people, of which the incense offering was the symbol (comp. page 176) and of which the high priest was especially reminded by his breastplate (see below) (comp. Hebr. 7:21—25; 9:24), and the **blessing**, which the priest pronounced each day over the people (comp. Luke 1:22 and pages 141—142).

2. **By teaching and interpreting the law** (Lev. 10:11 Deut. 31:9—13). For this reason Mal. 2:7, the priest is called an angel or “messenger of the Lord of hosts” whose “lips should keep knowledge and they should seek the law at his mouth.”—Moses summed up these phases of the priestly office (Deut. 33:10) when he said: “Thou shalt teach Jacob thy judgment, and Israel thy law (they) shall stand in thine house before thee and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar shall be offered.” But whether the priest made his sacrifices or taught the law, in either case he was the divinely appointed mediator (between God and the people). Without him the people could not come to God nor receive the forgiveness of its guilt; and without him God could not come to the people, for He had bound His grace upon the sacrifice offered by the priest. As a teacher he is God's messenger, who gives

not, indeed, give a new law but interprets the existing divine law (Mal. 2:7). True understanding of the divine will and reconciliation with God are connected with his office. And what is true of priests in general is especially true of the **high priest**. He above all others was the mediator who represented the people before God. This is especially apparent at the offering on the great day of atonement, which only he could bring and with the blood of which, once each year, he went into the Most Holy Place (Lev. 16).



The Priest in His Official Garb.



The Highpriest in His Official Garb.

A special **official vestment** or **garb** for the service in the sanctuary was provided. The garb of the **priest** consisted of a white linen close fitting coat woven of one piece and reaching down to the feet, a white linen bonnet wrapped around the head, white linen breeches, worn under the coat and covering the body from the chest to the thigh, and the girdle also of white linen embroidered in blue, purple, and scarlet, which was wrapped several times around the body (Ex. 39:29). Shining white linen was, no doubt, chosen to express purity and holiness. The feet were bare, because priests discharged their

function in a holy place. Here their feet could not be defiled, hence no covering was needed (comp. Ex. 3:5). The **high priest** wore the same dress as the ordinary priest, yet four distinctive articles were added: 1. an outer garment of byssus, woven of dark blue threads and without sleeves and descending to the knees, so that the white sleeves and the white skirt of the priestly coat could be seen. The coat was adorned at the hem by alternate blossoms of cotton pomegranates and golden bells. The latter announced to the people out in the Court the entrance and the actions of the high priest. They could thus accompany him with their thoughts and prayers; 2. the shoulder-piece worn on the outer garment to which by means of chains and ribbons 3. the breastplate was fastened. The latter was a rectangular pocket woven of the same material as the shoulder piece. On the outer side it was covered with a tress of gold threads, in which 12 costly stones with the names of the 12 tribes were fastened. The high priest as the representative of the whole people before the Lord thus carried the names of Israel on his heart, a memorial before the Lord at all times (Ex. 28:12, 29). On the inside of the breastplate were the enigmatic Urim and Thummim (which Luther rendered as "Licht und Recht") (vari-colored dice, shaken and cast to bring about a decision in difficult matters ?). 4. Above his priestly bonnet the high priest wore another head-piece of dark blue which was bound around, and to the front side of which was fastened a golden frontlet or plate with the inscription, "Holiness unto Jehovah."—While the Levites were solemnly consecrated for their office, the priests and high priests were consecrated by the laying on of hands and anointing (Lev. 8).

Questions:—1. What tribe in Israel was to furnish the servants of the sanctuary?—2. How did this come to pass?—3. How did God provide the necessities of life for them, since they were to serve God in His sanctuary?—4. What are we to understand by the priestly service proper?—5. To what house in the tribe of Levi must they belong who perform this priestly service?—6. Of what did the service of the other Levites consist?—7. Who from Aaron's family was chosen as high priest?—8. What was the function of the priests?—9. In what two-fold way were the priests to sanctify Israel and keep it holy?—10. What were they to do with the sacrifices and the blood thereof?—11. What did that signify?—12. What is meant by: Israel's sin must be atoned for?—13. What more can you tell me concerning the service of the priests?—14. What two forms of service in connection with offering of sacrifices were especially noteworthy?—15. What is the second way of sanctifying the people and keeping them holy?—16. What was the priest's position with regard to God and man in every form of his service?—17. Who especially was

regarded as mediator between God and Israel?—18. On what day was his mediatorship especially apparent?—19. What can you tell me of the official garb of priests?—20. What distinguished the official garb of the high priest from that of priests?—21. How was the breastplate constructed?—22. Why were the names of the twelve tribes of Israel fastened to the outer side of the breastplate?—23. What was on the inside of the breastplate?—24. What were the Urim and Thummim?—25. What was inscribed on the frontlet of the high priest?—26. How were the priests and the highpriests consecrated?

C. HOLY ACTS. These consisted of prayer and sacrifices. Both went hand in hand. Prayer is the surrender of the soul in words, sacrifice the surrender in deeds. This inner impulse of man to surrender to God in supplication, praise, and thanksgiving, is not satisfied merely to accomplish this in words, it must needs incorporate the word of prayer in some corresponding act, in which it offers something of its own, indeed makes a sacrifice in order to manifest the reality of its consecration. The most beautiful symbol of prayer is the **incense offering** with its odor ascending on high to God; for this reason Ps. 141:2. To dedicate self to God in prayer and sacrifice corresponds to the innermost of man. It accounts for the fact that both are already found before Abraham's day (Gen. 4:3; 4:26; [Luther rendered this "to preach," to be more exact, to call upon the Name of the Lord in prayer, to call out, proclaim the Name of the Lord on common worship in praise, comp. page 52] Gen. 8:20; in the times of the patriarchs, where the house-father also was the priest who offered prayer and sacrifice for himself and his household Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:18; 26:25; 33:20; 35:7), and to the present day with all heathen. In the law prayer and sacrifice, and especially the latter, are only regulated by God and only the sin- and trespass-offering are newly instituted. Now the sacrifice was emphasized to such an extent that it became the acme and culmination point of the entire worship of Israel.

1. Sacrifices as ordained by the law were divided into bloody and unbloody or meat (= meal) offerings, according to the material offered (1 Sam. 3:14).

Shewbread and the first fruits, usually added to the bloody sacrifices, constituted the unbloody sacrifices. Fruits in their natural state were brought, but also flour and baked loaves, the latter with the exception of Lev. 23:17 always unleavened, and then oil and wine. The sacrifices of animals, and these were regarded as better because, according to Lev. 17:11, they had substitutionary character,

were limited to the clean species (for laws concerning clean and unclean beasts see Lev. 11) and consisted of oxen, calves, sheep, goats, turtle-doves, and young pigeons. Sometimes the male sex is specified (as the better), and in some cases a certain age also. According to Lev. 22:27, all sacrificial animals must be at least 8 days old. Oxen were usually slaughtered when 3 years old. Great importance was attached to physical perfection, for God should receive only the best of its kind (Lev. 20:20; comp. Mal. 1:8, following). In every case the sacrifice must be the lawful property of him who offers it, earned by him through labor or care (not something found by him and gained in a hunt). That just such things were demanded which belong to man's food and nutriment, indicates that he is to give to God, the Creator of his life and Provider of his sustenance, of that which is most necessary for him, which is closely connected with and sustains his very life. The unbloody sacrifices, taken from the vegetable kingdom, were either placed on the altar and burned or they were eaten by the priests. Shewbread was exhibited before the face of God, so that His gracious eye might at all times fall upon the gifts of His people. Later when they had been replaced by others, they were likewise eaten by the priests. *Animals intended as sacrifices* were first exhibited at the entrance of the tabernacle. Then followed the laying on of hands. This act implied that the one sacrificing put that upon the animal what he meant to offer to God (his sin and guilt, but also his thanks and supplications), and that the animal thus burdened came to the altar and represented him before God. The animal was now slain. In the case of public sacrifices offered by the congregation, this was done by the priests, and in the case of private sacrifices, by those who brought them, or later by the Levites. At the killing it was especially important that the blood should be saved. For in the shedding of blood and thus the giving of the living soul (Lev. 17:11) to God, and the different use to which the blood was put, the stress was laid at the sacrifice. Whether it was poured out around the altar, or spread over the horns thereof, or sprinkled on the veil, or borne into the Holy and Most Holy Place and there put on the horns of the altar of burnt offering or the ark of the covenant, the use of the blood was a very important, ofttimes the most important, feature of the sacrifice. Finally the burning of the sacrifice followed, either of the entire sacrifice or of parts, especially the fat, on the altar. The vapor and smell ascending on high implied that the whole is an offering to God (Num. 28:6). The parts which were not burned fell to the priests. At thank and peace offerings they were consumed

in joyous meal at the sanctuary by those who brought them (Deut. 12:7).

2. According to their meaning, sacrifices were divided into two classes: a) those by means of which the individual Israelite or the whole people were placed into the status of holiness and divine acceptance, and b) those which were offered by such who were already in the status of holiness and accepted by God.

a. The first class included the sin- and trespass-offerings, the second the burnt-offerings, the thank- or better the peace-offering, and the meat-offerings. When an Israelite had unintentionally or through ignorance transgressed a commandment of the ceremonial law, he was regarded as unclean and excluded from the fellowship with God, yes, guilty of death. In order to reconsecrate him and again receive him into the fellowship with God and His people, God Himself had ordained the **sin offering** (Lev. 4:2, following; 6:18, following). The transgressor was ordered to bring a clean animal to the entrance of the Court, put his hands upon its head, and confess his transgression over it. The animal was now looked upon as having committed the sin of the one in question. For this reason it was now slain. The fat was burned on the altar, the blood was sprinkled in part on the altar and in part poured out at its base. This propitiated and expiated the sin of the transgressor, i. e., covered it up before God, so that he now again stood in the relation of holiness and acceptance, and his fellowship with God was restored. On the great Day of Atonement the sin-offering was brought for the sins of the whole people, the blood taken into the Most Holy Place by the high priest and sprinkled over the cover of the ark of the covenant, thus expiating the sins of the whole people, i. e., covering them up before God. The people were now again regarded as holy and acceptable to God and could appear before Him in His sanctuary for another year (comp. especially Lev. 16). The thought expressed by the sin-offering was the following: according to the law the soul which sins must die (Ex. 32:33). God in His justice can not simply overlook the sin nor yet forgive it. He must insist on reparation and satisfaction, and must thus inflict death. But He is also love and mercy. And in His love He Himself ordains a sacrifice, which suffers death in place of sinful man and with its blood covers up the sinful soul of man, so that God instead of punishing it can forgive and again receive it into His fellowship.—The **trespass offering** was closely related to the sin offering (Lev. 5:1, following, 7:1, following). It was brought especially in such cases

when in some way the property of others had been appropriated. Its basic thought was that of reparation or restitution.

b. The man who stood before God as holy and acceptable offered a **burnt offering** or a **whole offering** (Lev. 1:3, following; 6:1, following). He led the animal to the altar of burnt offering, dedicated it to the Lord by the laying on of hands, and killed it on the north side of the altar. The priest caught the blood and sprinkled it round about the altar. After the animal had been skinned and cut into pieces it was burned on the altar in all its parts (hence the name whole offering). That the thought of expiation was also attached to the burnt offering is evident from the use made of the blood. But the emphasis was not laid on this, but on the fact that the whole animal was burned and in its odor of sacrifice ascended on high. It symbolized the thought of complete and undivided surrender to God.—The **thank** or **peace offering** or **offering of completion** (Lev. 3:1, following; 7:11, following, 29, following) was usually brought as a voluntary offering or because of a vow. The special feature of this offering was this, that the greater part of the sacrificial animal was eaten in a happy meal at the place of offering by those who brought it. All members of the family took part and the poor, widows, orphans, and others, were also invited. It was a real common offering and represented a table community, a sort of a communion with God and such men who were acceptable to Him. Inasmuch as this sacrifice like the others was ordained by God, God Himself was the host, who here drew men into His fellowship, so that they might rejoice in His presence (insofar this offering was a prototype of something still in the future: the Holy Supper, and the meal of eternity, Isaiah 25:6; Luke 22:16). Inasmuch, however, as men prepared this meal, God in a way condescended to men and took part in their meal.—The **meat and drink offering** (Lev. 2:1, following; 6:14, following; Num. 15:4, following), consisting of flour, bread, etc., with incense, wine and oil, was usually something merely added to the animal sacrifice, burnt- and peace-offering (never of sin- and trespass-offering, for sin and guilt must first be atoned for before a gift acceptable to God can be made). Still it was also brought of its own accord and independent of the other. A part of the meat offering was burned on the altar as a "memorial" (Lev. 2:2, 9), since man with his sacrifice not only confesses before God that all gifts of nature are gifts of His goodness, but also commends himself to the memory of God.

Questions:—1. What were the two chief holy acts that were performed in Israel's sanctuary?—2. In what relation do prayer

and sacrifices stand to one another?—3. What offering is the most beautiful symbol of prayer?—4. What can you tell me about the age of prayer and sacrifices?—5. What offering was added by God in the law of Moses to those already prevailing?—6. How can we divide the sacrifices ordained by the law regarding the material offered?—7. What materials were offered in the unbloody sacrifices?—8. What animals were offered in the bloody sacrifices?—9. What was to be considered in selecting the animals to make them proper materials for sacrifice?—10. Why were the materials for bloody as well as unbloody sacrifices to be taken from such things which belonged to man's food?—11. How were the materials for unbloody sacrifices disposed of?—12. And what was done with the animals for bloody sacrifices?—13. What was the meaning of the laying on of hands?—14. What was to be sought and saved through the killing of animals?—15. Why in particular the blood?—16. What use was made of the blood in the various sacrifices?—17. What use was made of the meat of the animals?—18. What did the burning of parts or the whole of the meat signify?—19. How were the remaining parts of the meat disposed of?—20. Into what two classes may sacrifices be divided, according to their meaning?—21. Which sacrifices belonged to the first class?—22. And which to the second class?—23. In what case was an Israelite to bring a sin-offering?—24. What use was made of the animal that was to serve as a sin-offering?—25. What did it signify when its blood was sprinkled on the altar?—26. What was done with the blood of the sin-offering on the great day of atonement?—27. What is meant by "expiating" the sins of the people?—28. What important thought was to be kept alive in Israel by the sin-offering?—29. Who ordained the sacrifices in Israel, that demanded the shedding of blood for the covering of sin?—30. In what way does Israel's sin-offering prepare the way for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross?—31. What was the basic thought of trespass-offerings?—32. Who alone could offer a burnt-offering?—33. Describe the burnt-offering!—34. What did the burnt-offering symbolize?—35. What was the special feature of the thank- or peace-offering?—36. Why could it be called an offering of communion?—37. What sacred act of the New Testament does it typify?—38. What can you tell of the meat- and drink-offering?—39. What was its significance?

D. HOLY TIMES AND SEASONS. The order of the year which Israelites reckoned as a lunar year of 354 days, was regulated by the law and determined and controlled by religious ideas. The basic thought of the order of time was the number 7, the holy number of the Mosaic covenant. They were divided into Sabbath seasons and festive seasons.

1. The **Sabbath seasons** consisted of Sabbath day, New Moon's day, Sabbath year, and the Jubilee.

a) Although the **Sabbath day** existed before the law of Moses, yet it was enforced in general through the law, received as a divine command into the Ten Words (Ex. 20:10—11), and regarded as a mark of the covenant between God and Israel (Ex. 31:13, 17). It was to be the day of perfect rest for man and beast. All kinds of work was forbidden. All kinds of business, especially all work in the fields, even during the sowing and harvesting seasons (Ex. 34:21), picking up of wood (Num. 15:32), picking up of Manna (Ex. 16:26), baking (Ex. 16:23), kindling of fire (a laborious procedure in those days Ex. 35:3), travelling from home (Ex. 16:29; according to the context not in the sense of leaving altogether (comp. 2 Kings 4:23), but of leaving for the purpose of gaining food) was prohibited. During the times of the Maccabees and especially by the Pharisees these moderate prohibitions were exaggerated until they became intemperate and intolerable (comp. Matth. 12:1, following; John 5:10, following; Acts 1:12). The Sabbath commandment was supported and fortified in a two-fold way. In the first place by the example of the **Creator** (Ex. 20:11; 31:27). As after the creation of the world transpiring as it did in fixed periods of time, there followed a perfect and blessed rest, thus according to the divine example man also, created as he is in the image of God, should not labor without surcease. But after a fixed period of 6 days of labor he should rest and rejoice over his work on the seventh. Then it is regard for fellowmen which is taken into consideration (Deut. 5:14, 15): Israel should afford a time of rest for its servants, since from its own experience it knew what it meant to be servants, and should not begrudge this liberty, which it received from the hands of God, to others. Sabbath thus was not only a divinely ordained order of nature but also an institution grown out of the redemptive history of the people of God. As the Lord, the Creator purposes to make of man the master of the earth, thus also as the **Redeemer** He would give to His people liberty and blessed rest. In observing its Sabbath, Israel confessed God both as its Creator and its Redeemer. Thus Israel's Sabbath observance became a mark of distinction between it and other peoples. The religious meaning of the day was also indicated by the fact, that on this day the daily offerings were doubled (Num. 28:9, following) and the shewbread were renewed (Lev. 24:8), but above all things that according to Lev. 23:3, on this day the congregation was to assemble at the sanctuary.

b) **New Moon's Day**, i. e., the first day of the month was observed with special burnt offerings and a sin offering according to Num.

28:11—15. Though the Mosaic law has nothing more to say about it, yet we know from other parts of the Bible that on this day, as on the Sabbath, labor ceased, even though occasionally two days of rest followed each other, and that the people congregated to worship (Am. 8:5; Isaiah 1:13; 2 Kings 4:23). From Saul's history we learn that festive meals were held even two days in succession (1 Sam. 20:5, 26, 27). New Moon's Day had this in common with the Sabbath, that unlike the other great feasts it was celebrated all over the land. The Sabbatical New Moon's Day, i. e., the New Moon's Day of the 7th month (Lev. 23:24, 25), was especially celebrated. It is also called the "Feast of Trumpets," since on this day there was special blowing of trumpets. Otherwise it was observed as a day of rest and of special sacrifices. In post-biblical times the Jews called this day New Year's Day. It marked the beginning of the civic year.

c) **The Sabbath Year**, i. e., every 7th year, was a year of rest for the entire land, which was not tilled in this year (Ex. 23:10, 11; Lev. 25:1—7; Deut. 15:1—11; 31:10—13). As it was ordained for man to dedicate one day out of every seven as a day of rest to the Lord, thus also the soil was to have a year of rest dedicated to the Lord after six years of tilling (Lev. 25:2, 4, 6). In this year the fields were not tilled nor the fruits growing spontaneously harvested, but were given to the poor and to the beasts of the field. At the same time the 7th year was to be a year of "release" in which no debt of an Israelite debtor was to be exacted (Deut. 15:1, following; 31:10, following), and all Israelitic slaves were to be manumitted and freed (Deut. 15:12, following). The meaning of this institution was, of course, in the first place an economic one. It was a protective measure to safeguard the fertility of the land. Yet its moral and religious meaning was even greater: all selfish exploitation of man and beasts was to be curbed and hindered, and the thought fostered, that like time (comp. Sabbath), the soil also is the property of the Lord. For this reason the human owner renounced all proceeds each 7th year to the glory of the heavenly owner in favor of those for whom God alone cares. This cessation of all labor in the fields, the release of all debts, and the manumission of all slaves was to bring the people of God a Sabbath rest on a large scale, which pointed back to Paradise, where man lived of divine blessing and without laboring in the sweat of his brow, and it was to direct the attention to the final goal of God, where the ban now resting on human life and work on account of sin is removed.

d) The **Jubilee Year**, i. e., the 50th year (7 times 7 Sabbatical years) also called liberty year (Lev. 25: 8, following), was announced by the blowing of trumpets on the 10th day of the 7th month, the great Day of Atonement. In this year, as in a Sabbath year, there was to be neither sowing nor reaping. Whatever was needed was taken from the fields without a regular harvesting. The special features of this year are described in Lev. 25:10. In two respects the Jubilee year was to restore the conditions of the people changed in the mutations of time to their original status: 1) Personal freedom. Israelites who had become slaves as a result of poverty or through indebtedness were liberated without compensation (Lev. 25:40), and not only individuals who personally and for themselves had become slaves (these were already freed each Sabbatical year), but families with their inheritances. The reason given in Lev. 25:42 is especially worthy of note: the members of this people are the Lord's. They are not slaves of men. For this reason they shall not be slaves outside of the pale of law, but shall only enter into a limited condition of servitude to their fellow citizens. 2) Property inasmuch as it is the heritage of families. The land which came by inheritance really was unsalable. But if it was sold on account of poverty, etc., it should revert to its legal owner. The sale was therefore really only a leasing or a farming out, a sale of its proceeds, until the jubilee, the nearness of which also determined the price. And here, too, the reason is noteworthy (Lev. 25:23): the Lord is the real possessor, the people are only His guests. The soil is given the whole people for its administration and usufruct. Hence each generation, each family, must have its share. The thought of the number seven and the Sabbath was thus brought to its height through this institution of the Jubilee. The seven week days, which were extended to years in the Sabbath year, were here made seven times seven years, and since here two years of rest followed each other, the 49th year (Sabbath year) and the 50th (Jubilee), were extended to a Sabbath period. The principal thought, however, was this, that in this year everything of God's people is restored to its original God-ordained condition. Everything disturbed should be restored, the alienated returned, the unfree should be redeemed. Thus it became a prototype of the "acceptable year of the Lord" coming with Christ in time and especially in eternity (Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 4:21).

Questions:—1. According to what did the Israelites reckon their year?—2. Of how many days did their year consist?—3. What number controls Israel's holy times and seasons?—4. What holy seasons did they distinguish?—5. Of what did the Sabbath

seasons consist?—6. When already was the Sabbath-day instituted?—7. What did the law of Moses add in regard to the Sabbath-day?—8. What was the significance of the Sabbath-day?—9. Enumerate some forbidden works that are mentioned!—10. In what two-fold way was the Sabbath commandment supported in the law?—11. How does it rest upon the Divine example of the Creator?—12. Why did God, as Redeemer, ordain the Sabbath-day?—13. What did Israel therefore confess when in distinction from other nations it kept the seventh day as Sabbath-day?—14. How was the Sabbath distinguished in the sanctuary?—15. What is to be understood by New Moon's Day?—16. What by the Sabbatical New Moon's Day?—17. And what by the Sabbath Year?—18. What was prohibited during this whole year?—19. To whom were the fruits growing spontaneously to be given?—20. What other commandments related to the Sabbath Year?—21. What was the economic meaning of the Sabbath Year?—22. And what was its religious and moral meaning?—23. In what respect was the Sabbath Year a vivid reminder of paradise?—24. What do we understand by the Jubilee Year?—25. Whence is its name derived?—26. In what two respects was the Jubilee Year to remind Israel that it would eventually return to its original status?—27. What thought is at the root of the provision, that every Israelite must be liberated in this year?—28. And what thought underlies the provision that all property must revert to its original owner in this year?—29. Where does Jesus proclaim that the real year of Jubilee has arrived with His coming?

2. **Festive Cycles.** The law ordained three great feasts, as feasts of convocation, to preserve the unity of the twelve tribes. For this reason every adult male Israelite must appear at the sanctuary (Ex. 34:23, following). Two of them, the Passover and the Tabernacles, had a two-fold meaning. They were harvest feasts, and at the same time religious memorials. Pentecost, however, was not connected with any event of sacred history by the Mosaic code. It received this meaning during the last centuries before Christ, when it was celebrated as a memorial of the promulgation of the law on Sinai (comp. Ex. 19:1).

a) **The Passover**, also known as the Feast of the Unleavened Bread (Ex. 23:15), continued for eight days and was observed from the 14—21 of Nisan (April). The beginning of the harvest was dedicated and hallowed and thanksgiving for it was offered (Deut. 16:9). Hence the first fruits of barley, which ripens first in Palestine, was offered to the Lord (Lev. 23:10, following). It was brought into the national sanctuary and here waved before the Lord by the priest.—Far more prominent, however, was the remembrance of the deliverance from Egypt and the repetition of the paschal sacrifice and the paschal meal connected therewith (Luther: Easter), see pages 111 f.).

It began on the evening of the 14th day of the month, in which the exodus from Egypt took place, and which for this reason was named as the first day (namely of their spiritual year). And it began with the slaying of the lamb, which had already been selected by every house-father on the 10th day for his family, a male animal without blemish and one year old (sheep or goat). The slaying should take place "between two evenings" (Ex. 12:6), i. e., between sunset and the beginning of the night; later this was understood to mean between afternoon and sunset. The blood of the animal, which was later always slain at the sanctuary, was no longer used to spread over the posts of the door, but was taken by the priest as an expiation (covering) of the sin of the family and brought to the altar. The lamb itself was roasted on a spit, so that no bone was broken, and eaten at home with unleavened bread and bitter herbs (wild lettuce, endive, and the like), as a memorial of the haste with which they left Egypt and the bitterness of their sojourn there. Nothing dare be taken from the house, nor yet left over till the morning. Every member of the house, who was circumcised (Ex. 12:43, following) and at the same time was not unclean, was to take part under threat of heavy penalty. It was a sacrificial meal, where the flesh of the sacrifice was eaten, and its blood cleansed from sin. And as a sacrificial meal it was to symbolize the restored fellowship between God and man and between man and man (comp. 1 Cor. 10:17, following). The lamb through its blood was to atone for the sins of the members of the family, and as it represented an unbroken whole, it also united those which ate of it into a small congregation, united through the same salvation (see page 112). The home-like character of the paschal meal, which in a way still emphasized the priesthood of all house-fathers, enhanced its peculiar value. The eating of the unleavened bread continued from the 15th to the 21st day. During this entire time the eating of anything leavened was forbidden on penalty of extirpation. The 15th and the 21st days, the first and the seventh of the festive week, for which the 14th was the eve, were great feasts, in which the whole congregation assembled and all labor ceased (Ex. 12:14, following; Lev. 23:6, following). The entire festive season was distinguished by special sacrifices (Lev. 23:8; Num. 28:16, following).—Even though at later times, when the people lived in Canaan and the national sanctuary stood in Jerusalem, many differences supervened, yet the fundamentals remained the same even at the time of Jesus, and, together with some additions, were almost painfully observed.

b) **Pentecost** was celebrated on the 50th day after Passover (hence the name Pentecost from the Greek "pentekoste" (= fiftieth, namely the fiftieth day), thus seven full weeks later. The day was computed from the day of the bringing of the first fruit (Lev. 23:15, following). Since this day according to Lev. 23:11, was a day following the Sabbath i. e., a Sunday, Pentecost also was observed on a Sunday. (During Jesus' time Lev. 23:11 was understood somewhat differently, and the 7 weeks were invariably computed from the 16th of Nisan, so that Pentecost happened on different days of the week.) Since Pentecost formed the close of the seven weeks, it was also called the **Feast of Weeks** (Deut. 16:10), and since it concluded the harvest begun on the Passover it was called the Harvest Festival (Ex. 23:16). It was a day of thanksgiving for the harvest and therefore was invested with a joyous character. On this day men were to appear before God with voluntary gifts, the value and greatness of which was determined according to possessions and the proceeds of the harvest. And at the sacrificial meals to be provided at the sanctuary, where men with their entire families rejoiced before the Lord, the poor, Levites, and strangers were not to be forgotten (Deut. 16:10, following). The public offerings prescribed for the congregation for Pentecost are cited in Lev. 23:15—21 and Num. 28:26—31. A special feature of this celebration was the bringing of the two Pentecostal loaves, wave-loaves, baked of the finest flour of wheat which ripened last in Palestine. The law demanded only one feastday for Pentecost, distinguished it by Sabbatical rest, assemblies for the purpose of worship, and the already mentioned offerings and sacrificial meals. The later Jews added another day.

c) **The Feast of Tabernacles** was the third and last of the great "pilgrim feasts," which Israel celebrated unto the Lord (Ex. 34:22, following; Lev. 23:34, following; Deut. 16:13, following). It was to begin on the 15th day of the 7th month, continue for seven days, and close on the 8th with solemn convocation. It was a thanksgiving day for the proceeds of the barns and the wine presses. Hence it was also termed the Feast of the Ingathering (Ex. 34:22) and marked the end of the season of harvest. The celebration was marked by its joyousness (Deut. 16:14 following). As befitting a harvest festival, special offerings were prescribed for these days (Lev. 23:37; Num. 29:12—39). The people joyously partook of the sacrificial meals and lived in booths. These consisted of wooden structures, covered with palm branches and green boughs (Lev. 23:40). This was only natural where so large a number of people assembled. Yet it also

had a special reason: these booths were to remind the Israelites of their journey through the wilderness, where they also dwelt in booths, and were graciously protected and preserved by God (Lev. 23:42, following). Thus this feast was not only a thanksgiving feast for the blessings of nature again received from the Lord, but also for the gracious guidance and help, which they experienced at the time of their election and redemption. That was its deeper spiritual meaning.

Added to the above named three great feasts, which united the people in one great unity, there was a national day of humiliation and repentance, the **great Day of Atonement**. It was celebrated in the same month (September) in which the Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated, only five days earlier, namely on the 10th of the month (Lev. 16:29; 23:27). The purpose of this day is already indicated by its name. It was to bring about a general expiation and atonement (covering) for the sins still clinging to people and priests, especially the transgression against the sacred place and sacred service committed unintentionally (Lev. 16:16, 19; Hebr. 9:7). After a careful bath and clothed in unadorned white raiment, the high priest first brought a sin offering, namely, a bullock, and this first of all for himself and his own household (priesthood), and then a sin offering for the people, namely, a goat (scape-goat). For this latter procedure he placed two goats before the Lord, before the portal of the sanctuary, and cast the lot. To judge from the later custom he dropped two little metal plates into an urn, and then without looking at them, laid the one on the goat at his right side and the other on the goat at his left. While the people now fell on their knees he read the two inscriptions engraved on the plates: "for Jahve" and "for Azazel." This latter name indicated the unclean spirit (demon) of the wilderness. The first goat was offered to the Lord as a sin offering for the people, and the second, after the transgression of the children of Israel had been confessed and laid on its head by the high priest, driven out into the "land not inhabited" (Lev. 16:21, following). It was driven out into the desert so that it could not return. The meaning was not, that a sacrifice should be brought to the evil spirit in the wilderness, but that the sins and uncleanness of the people were not only expiated (covered), but also entirely done away with. They had no place in the midst of a holy people and a holy land, but must stay out in the unclean desert. The extraordinary thing about the two sin offerings (bullock and goat), sacrificed on the Day of Atonement, consisted in this that the high priest carried a vessel filled with the blood of each into the Most Holy Place to sprinkle over the mercy seat (the cover

of the ark). Enveloped by a protecting cloud of incense he was to enter this otherwise unapproachable place, and sprinkling this blood cleanse the entire sanctuary, from the Most Holy Place to the altar of the burnt offering in the Court, from all sins and defilements cleaving to the priesthood and the people. Then he divested himself of the plain white garments, bathed again, and dressed in his highpriestly adornments to bring a two-fold burnt offering: a ram for himself and the priesthood, and a ram for the people. All the people were to castigate themselves on this day of humiliation and prayer, i. e., fast and rest from every labor (Lev. 16:29).—The idea and concept of expiation (covering of sin) which pervaded the entire order of sacrifices in the Old Testament, was most clearly and forcibly expressed on the Day of Atonement. Here by a great public offering and sacrifice the entire sins of all the people were expiated (as far as this was possible in the Old Dispensation), and the sanctuary cleansed of all defilements. Thus as the Old Testament sin offering in general is a prototype, so especially the sacrifice brought on the great Day of Atonement (comp. Hebr. 9). More of this later.

The Feast of Purim, the Feast of the Dedication, and a number of feast days, do not belong to the Mosaic period, but were instituted during the last centuries prior to the coming of Christ (Esther 9:17, following; John 10:22).

Questions:—1. What holy seasons were distinguished in Israel?—2. Enumerate the Sabbath seasons!—3. Enumerate the Festive Cycles!—4. What provision of the law pertained to all three feasts alike?—5. What political purpose were they to serve?—6. What two-fold meaning attached to the Passover and the Tabernacles, besides their political import?—7. When did Pentecost receive a religious meaning?—8. What did it consist of?—9. When was the Passover celebrated?—10. What other name did it also bear?—11. Whence was this name derived?—12. What, however, was the chief significance of this feast?—13. How was it therefore observed?—14. When was the slaying of the sacrificial animal to take place?—15. What was done with the blood?—16. What was the meaning of this use of the blood?—17. What does it mean, As an expiation of sins?—18. In what way was the sacrificial lamb to be prepared and eaten?—19. In what two-fold sense was this passover meal a meal of communion?—20. What sacred institution of the New Testament was thus typified by the passover meal?—21. What regulations were made for the remaining seven passover days?—22. When was Pentecost celebrated in Israel?—23. What can you tell me of the derivation of this name?—24. On what day of the week was Pentecost observed?—25. For what reason was it also called Feast of Weeks?—26. How many days did the celebration last?—27.

With what modern festival can we best compare the Jewish Pentecost?—28. Which was the third of the great Jewish feasts?—29. When was it celebrated?—30. Which one of the seven days was considered the greatest?—31. For what purpose was it observed?—32. How was it observed?—33. What great National day of humiliation and repentance was added to these three great feasts?—34. When was the great Day of Atonement observed?—35. For what purpose was it observed?—36. Describe the celebration of it!—37. For what purpose were two goats used?—38. What did it mean that one of the goats was driven into the wilderness?—39. What was the extraordinary thing about the offering on the great Day of Atonement?—40. What was the meaning of it when the cover of the ark was sprinkled with blood?—41. Why was only the cover of the ark sprinkled?—42. How were the people to act on the Day of Atonement?—43. In what respect is the offering on the great Day of Atonement in particular a type of the offering of Christ on the cross?

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The regulations concerning **clean** and **unclean** were also a part of the ceremonial law, for a man must be clean himself before he can participate in any part of the service in the sanctuary. When a man had become unclean it required a sacrifice (at least in the case of serious transgressions, otherwise a simple ablution or washing sufficed) to be clean again. There were three reasons especially for which a man became unclean and defiled according to the law: 1. Through actions connected with procreation and birth. For this reason an Israelite woman was unclean for 40 days after the birth of a son, and only after a purification offering could she again take part with others in the services of the sanctuary. The offering consisted of a lamb in its first year for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or turtle dove for a sin offering for the wealthy, and for the poor of two young pigeons or turtle doves, of which one was to be a burnt offering and the other a sin offering (Luke 2:22—32; Lev. 12:1—8); 2. Through contact with a dead body, either of man or certain beasts, graves, mortuaries or rooms for the dead and their utensils. This entailed a seven day defilement, during which one could not appear in the sanctuary, and which required a purification. The purification in this case was brought about by the ashes of a red heifer and a specially prepared and preserved water for sprinkling (Num. 19). A red heifer (red was regarded as the color of life) was sacrificed as often as was necessary as a sin offering for the entire congregation which on account of its sin was sealed with death. The sacrifice was made outside the camp, and together with cedar-wood (emblem of incorruptibility), scarlet wool dyed with coccus (cochineal)

(emblem of life) and hyssop (emblem of purification, Ps. 51:7) was burnt to ashes. This was mixed with flowing water, and the lye thus produced preserved and kept for the purpose of sprinkling in cases of defilement. 3. Through leprosy and similar skin diseases. Leprosy excluded the afflicted not only from the sacred convocation but also from society in general. In order that no clean person might be defiled through his touch, the person afflicted by this terrible malady, so common in oriental countries, was forced to remain outside of the camp or city, and by the cry "unclean, unclean" make himself known from the distance (Lev. 13:45; comp. Luke 17:12). Since leprosy was not only regarded as a disease, but also as a defilement, it remained for the priest to determine its appearance and its cure. All details, including the offering for purification are recorded in Lev. 13 and 14.—These regulations concerning "clean" and "unclean," many of which were necessary and salutary as purely hygienic measures (leprosy), and many of which were also observed by other nations, were to express the thought, that sin also exerts its baneful influence on the body and draws this into the same perdition. Sin also brought bodily disease and death into the world; birth transmits sin from parents to children (Ps. 51:5; comp. Gen. 8:21). Leprosy beginning modestly enough and gradually spreading over the entire body and bringing about a gradual dying and wasting away, represents the terrible power, which sin has. It also begins with a small beginning, envelopes the entire life, and seeks to deliver man over to spiritual and eternal death.

The concept of "clean" and "unclean" also pervades and governs the **regulations concerning meat and drink**, for "clean" animals could be eaten by the people, whereas the eating of the "unclean" was prohibited (Lev. 20:24—26; comp. Acts 10:10—16). According to Lev. 11 and Deut. 14 all animals living on land which did not chew the cud and were not cloven footed were unclean. Of those in the water those which were without fins and scales were also unclean. Among birds and fowls all birds of prey were unclean. A fourth class included the small animals and creeping things (insects, amphibia, worms, snakes, lizards, frogs, toads, moles, mice, ferrets, and the like). With the exception of four kinds of locusts this whole last class was unclean. It is hard to see just what the differentiating factor in individual cases was. The legislation here adopted was largely connected with existing custom (comp. Gen. 7:2, 8; also Gen. 17:8). The reason for making any differentiation at all is given in Lev. 20:24—26 as the following: because and as the Lord

separated Israel from all other peoples to be His holy people, so and for this reason Israel should also separate all clean animals from the unclean. This selection of certain clean animals should symbolize in the animal world, what Israel's election realized among men. It was also to be a test for Israel's obedience, namely to prove to the world, by abstaining from certain types of food, that it is a select people.—The prohibition forbidding the consumption of blood (Lev. 17:10), and of beasts which were strangled or whose blood had not been drawn off, was based on the fact, according to Lev. 17:11, that blood is the means of atonement for the sins of Israel.

In this connection it is well to mention the **vow** met with so often in the Old Testament. It is nowhere commanded in the law, but certain rules were laid down for those who would make a vow. Whoever makes a vow shall be careful to fulfill it rapidly and completely, but shall not overestimate its merits (Deut. 23:22–24). All legal and honest property as well as one's own person could be vowed to Jahve, but all things thus vowed, with the exception of sacrificial animals, could also be redeemed through a ransom (Particulars see Lev. 27). Wives and daughters could make vows only with the consent of husband or father, since they were without property (Num. 30:40 following).—Among the vows concerning one's own person, that of the Nazarite is the most important. The Nazarite (i. e., the one separated) through a voluntary vow obligated himself to abstain from all intoxicating beverages for a time and to permit no shears to touch his head. At a later time parents often vowed their children to be lifelong Nazarites (Judges 13; comp. 1 Sam. 1:11; Luke 1:15). The basic idea at the bottom of the Nazarite's vow was the separation from the world "unto Jahve" (Num. 6:2). Hence the promise to renounce all intoxicating drink, which hinders sanctification. Hair is an ornament for man, a natural crown for the head. Long hair should be the diadem of his consecration unto God, the mark and witness of his holy station. By cutting it off he re-entered the world. The hair was then burned together with a thank offering.—

Questions:—1. What regulations of the Mosaic law are closely connected with the offerings in Israel?—2. In what way were these regulations so connected?—3. What three causes produced ceremonial defilement that could be removed only by sacrifices?—4. What can you tell me of the purification offering after the birth of a son?—5. What can you tell me of the purification offering after contact with the dead?—6. What passage in the Psalms refers to it?—7. How were lepers treated in Israel?—8. What thought was to find expression through the

regulations concerning clean and unclean?—9. In what respect is leprosy a peculiarly fitting symbol of sin?—10. What further regulations of the Mosaic law were governed by the difference between clean and unclean?—11. Name some animals that were considered unclean, and the consumption of which was therefore prohibited?—12. What reason is stated in the law for any differentiating between clean and unclean animals?—13. Why was the consumption of blood forbidden?—14. What is the nature of the provisions of the law concerning vows?—15. What vow is most interesting for the reader of the Bible?—16. What do you know of the Nazarite vow?—17. What thought is at the root of the Nazarite life?—18. Why was it part of the Nazarite life, that the hair should not be cut, so long as the vow lasted?

* * *

These are the fundamental features of the Mosaic code, the moral code, civil code, and the ceremonial code. In its entirety it was probably never perfectly enforced, and there were times when most of its provisions were practically forgotten. The ceremonial law was probably most painfully observed during the period after the Babylonian captivity and in the century before Christ as well as during His lifetime. Many of the provisions of the civil and especially of the ceremonial law seem strange to us today, and yet the entire law had a specific **purpose** from which angle its provisions must be understood and evaluated. This consisted principally of two closely united facts:

1. The whole law was to be like a fence or an inclosure about the people, separating them from other peoples and marking them as God's own special people (Gal. 3: 23; Eph. 2: 14, 15; comp. Ex. 19: 5, 6).

2. It was to be a **pedagogue or schoolmaster** unto Christ (Gal. 3: 23, 24). Israel was not to be separated from the other peoples without a purpose or a definite goal. But by means of this separation, God would keep it in the direction of a certain definite aim. The ancient Greeks had a **pedagogue**, a guide or leader for their boys. It was his duty to accompany them when they left the house, to watch over them that they might not leave the right path, and to guide them that they might reach the place to which, according to the intention of their parents, they were to go. The Mosaic law had this same purpose for Israel. It directed Israel towards Christ. And it discharged this function:

a) by keeping the divine will of holiness like a polished mirror constantly and unmistakably before their eyes (Lev. 19: 2), so that no man could excuse himself and say, I did not know what God's will was;

b) by calling forth and making known the evil lust and the disinclination to do the will of God as it lives in the hearts of the people, so that every Israelite could see and know the evil dwelling in his own heart (Rom. 7:8—11). As water draws forth the living fire dwelling in unslacked lime, so that it steams and bubbles and becomes evident, and one knows what the lime contains, the law with its prohibitions should bring forth the hidden opposition to God's will, so that man, who easily deceives himself concerning himself, notices and perceives, that after all there is only enmity to God dwelling in his heart (Rom. 8:7);

c) by revealing to every Israelite as in a mirror his sins already committed in thought, word, and deed, as the mirror shows to any man who uses it, his own uncleanness (Rom. 3:20);

d) by stimulating every Israelite, to fulfill God's will in the future, so that his honest attempt to do this will show him how he lacks all ability. For the law gives no strength and no life, neither to obviate sin already done, nor to prevent sin in the future and do the will of God (Gal. 3:21; 2 Cor. 3:6);

e) by proclaiming God's wrath and curse over the sin, which still slumbers in the heart or comes forth in conscious thoughts, words and deeds, and also proclaiming his own inability to do good (Deut. 27:26).

But in performing this task it held Israel in the direction toward Christ, for it made clear to man, that he needs forgiveness for sin and guilt, and strength for new life, if he would not forever remain or again and again come under the curse of the law. And this, forgiveness as well as strength and power, is what Christ was to bring and did bring.

The law concerning the sin- and trespass-offering led to the same knowledge, only by means of picture language. For if every transgression of the regulations concerning the sanctuary demanded a bloody sacrifice, whereby the transgressor must needs confess his sins over the sacrificial animal and this must then die in his stead, what did this signify but this, that sin demands punishment, leads to death, and can not be remitted by God unless the punishment is borne by some one else and thus divine justice is satisfied? But the sin offering was also a **promise**. It meant to call forth and foster the thought in Israel, God will not only punish, He will Himself also bring about forgiveness. For if the blood of the animal offered as a sin offering is borne into the Most Holy Place on the great Day of Atonement and is sprinkled on the cover of the ark of the covenant,

so that Israel's sin is expiated, i. e., covered up, before God, it was to indicate this, Only wait, the time is coming when a true sin offering will be brought, a Lamb of God will shed His blood, through which all sin will in truth be covered up, and a lasting expiation and forgiveness brought about. Israel's order of sacrifices has thus truly been called the gospel written in picture writing. Unable to bring about forgiveness—for it only made it possible for the individual Israelite or the people again to appear before God in the sanctuary (Hebr. 10:1—4); only he found forgiveness in truth in the Old Testament who believed in Jahve, who will bring about salvation for all the world—the law pointed to the future, where through the death of the Lamb of God and the faith in Him forgiveness and the power for new life will be wrought (comp. Hebr. 9:11—15; Jer. 31:31—34; Hebr. 8:8—12). Compared with this glorious future brought about by Christ, these regulations of the ceremonial law are like shadows cast ahead by future events (Col. 2:17). They are only a weak forecast, expressed in things that belong to this material world, of the invisible and eternal to come (Gal. 4:9). Yet, however small they may seem, when we look backwards from Golgotha and Pentecost, for the people living in the Old Testament and waiting for Golgotha and Pentecost, they were the guides to this time.

With Christ's life work the whole Mosaic law is abrogated, not only the civil law intended for the land of Canaan, and not only the ceremonial, bound to the temple at Jerusalem and fulfilled in Christ, but also the moral law. Of course, not in the sense as though the believers in Christ and those justified through Him might now live as their flesh dictated. Not at all (Rom. 3:31; 6:2, 12)! But being in Christ, who has fulfilled the entire law for them and borne its curse (Rom. 10:4), they are no longer under the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13) and no longer under the **dominion** and **coercion** of the law (1 Tim. 1:9). For they are renewed through God's spirit and now freely do what the moral law demands compelled only by an inner power (Ezek. 26:26, 27). The Epistle to the Galatians is the strenuous protest of St. Paul against all, who would re-introduce the deeds of the law. And passages like Col. 2:16, 17; Rom. 10:4; 14:17, 18; 1 Tim. 1:9, are of the greatest importance for Christians, who would not fall back from that liberty, wrought for us by Christ, into the servile ways of the Old Testament (Gal. 5:1; 4:1—11). Luther taught us this anew. Only in so far as Christians carry the former sinful and indolent flesh, does the law proclaim for them the curse

of God, and ever and again drive to Christ and His forgiveness, and stimulate them to do His will.

This freedom from the letter of the Mosaic law does not exclude, rather does it include, that the Christian recognizes the basic thoughts of God, dwelling, as they do, behind the provisions of the Mosaic code. As sure as it is, that we no longer bring our incense offerings and burnt offerings, even so sure is it that we daily commune in prayer with God, and that with everything which we may have or know we are consecrated to God and live only to Him, the very thought behind it all (Rom. 14:8). Or as true as it is, that the Old Testament provision of the tithe for the sanctuary, or the provision not to fetch the forgotten sheaf in the field, but to leave it for the poor (Deut 24:19) has been done away with, it is equally true that we will gladly give for the Church and the Kingdom of God and support the poor. Indeed, as Christians we can not do otherwise. We do not do it, because the law compels us, nor yet because we fear punishment, nor yet in the hope of thereby meriting the grace of God and the forgiveness of sins, but compelled by an inner impulse, by grateful love to Him who first loved us, and for Christ's sake forgives us our sins and receives us as His children. Thus love becomes the fulfillment of the law (Rom. 13:10).

Questions:—1. What do we know concerning the enforcement of the Mosaic law?—2. What double purpose governed all the provisions of the law?—3. Where does Paul expressly state that through the law Israel was to be separated, as with a fence, from other peoples?—4. Where does Paul state that this separation of Israel through the law was not to be without purpose, but a means to keep Israel in the direction toward Christ?—5. What custom among the Greeks explains the term Paul uses in this passage?—6. How many functions was the law to perform in keeping Israel in the direction toward Christ?—7. Name them!—8. Where does God Himself say that the law was to be for Israel a mirror of divine holiness, which would tell them what is God's will?—9. Where does Paul say that by the law the sin dwelling in the heart is called forth, in order to reveal to man the evil that dwells there?—10. What illustration clearly sets forth this function of the law?—11. Where does Paul say that in the law, as in a mirror, man's sins committed in thought, word and deed are shown?—12. What knowledge would the law provoke by stimulating man to fulfill God's will?—13. What, indeed, is the law powerless to give?—14. Where did Paul say that it can give no strength?—15. What, finally, was the law to proclaim over all sin, whether it still slumbers in the heart, or has come forth in wicked thoughts, words or

deeds?—16. In what passage did God unmistakably say so?—17. In what way was the law able to keep Israel in the direction toward Christ by proclaiming God's curse over sin and showing its inability to keep the law?—18. To what knowledge was the law concerning the sin and trespass-offering to lead?—19. Show in what way it could and would do this?—20. The law concerning the sin- and trespass-offering, however, intended more than this; what was the sin-offering at the same time?—21. In what respect is it a promise?—22. What sin-offering in particular was to be a promise of a real expiation of sins which God was to provide?—23. What indeed was the Old Testament sin-offering unable to bring about?—24. Where is this expressly written in the New Testament?—25. And where did the Old Testament expressly state that forgiveness of sins and strength for a new life were to be obtained in the New Testament through the death of Christ, the sacrificial lamb?—26. What does the Apostle Paul call the Old Testament when he compares it to the blessings of salvation in the New Testament?—27. What effect did the life-work of Christ have on the status of the whole Mosaic law?—28. Why can you easily understand that the civil law was abrogated?—29. And why, that the ceremonial law also was abrogated?—30. What law, however, also was abrogated through the life-work of Christ?—31. In which epistle does Paul develop this truth, and emphasize the gospel-freedom from the law?—32. How is this freedom from the Mosaic law, surely, not to be interpreted?—33. Where does Paul expressly disclaim such misinterpretation?—34. What does he mean to say when he writes, We Christians are free from the Mosaic law?—35. In what passage does he say that through Christ we are free from the curse of the law?—36. And in what passage, that a righteous man through Christ is free from the dominion of the law?—37. In what respect only is the Christian, too, under the curse and dominion of the law?—38. And what is the intention of the law when it proclaims for Christians the curse of God over sin?—39. But though the Christian is free from the letter of the law, what does that not include?—40. What is the basic thought in the provisions for incense- and burnt-offerings, that is valid for Christians though we bring no incense- and burnt-offerings?—41. What is the basic thought in the provisions concerning tithing for the sanctuary?—42. What is the basic thought in the provision to let the poor glean the fields?—43. From what motives will we, if we would be true Christians, keep these basic thoughts of the law?—44. In what passage does Paul state that no obedience of the law pleases God unless it flows from grateful love to Him?—45. In what way does the first part of our Catechism teach the same truth?

Who Wrote the Books of Moses?

The first five books of the Old Testament, the study of which we have just finished, are called the "**Pentateuch**" (i. e., five-fold book),

or the "Five Books of Moses" in our Bibles. The Jews who placed this superscription and the Christian Church that adopted it, did not only want to say thereby, These are books that tell of Moses, of his life and labors. That, indeed, were possible for the Book of Joshua and the Book of Judges. These are really and only so called because they tell of Joshua and the Judges. Such, however, cannot be the case with the five books of Moses. In that case the caption would not fit the most important book of the five, that is, the first one; for it does not tell of Moses, but of events much earlier. Even the last chapter of Genesis tells a story that happened at least 350 years before the birth of Moses. Besides there are a number of passages in the five books of Moses which expressly state that Moses has written them, and the New Testament speaks of the "writings" of Moses (see below). Accordingly, the Jews as well as the Christians really wanted to say thereby, These five books were written by Moses. This interpretation was commonly accepted until about 100 years ago. Then came the so-called "Negative Criticism" with its theories, that Moses was not the author of these books, that they are not a unit of composition, that they were gathered from various and partly contradictory sources and only outwardly conjoined, that they do not contain dependable history, yea even, that they are not history at all, but myths and legends that were current among the Jews. This latter thought gained currency when the principle of evolution was adopted from the natural sciences and applied to the history of Israel's religion. Accordingly, it was conjectured, that the pure concept of God as found among the Patriarchs and Moses was impossible at that time; so pure a concept of God could only stand at the end, not at the beginning of the development. It could have taken shape in the age of the prophets during and after the exile. In order to make it appear that their beliefs concided with the beliefs of the remotest past, the prophets and priests invented the stories of the fall, and of the patriarchs, and of Moses, and told them as though they had really happened.

To disprove the latter assertion it is only necessary for Christians to remember two facts:—1. Israel's religion did not grow by development but was given by divine revelation. Man did not find God in the slow process of time; God has given and revealed Himself to man by word and deed, and there is no reason why such a revelation could not occur at the beginning of Israel's history as well as at its end;—2. Jesus Christ and His apostles certainly did not regard the stories narrated in the five books of Moses as myths and legends,

but as records of real happenings. In regard to the story of Creation compare Heb. 1:2; 11:3; Col. 1:16; John 1:3; Rom. 11:36; Acts 14:15; 17:23, 24; Matt. 19:8; 1 Cor. 11:8, 9; James 3:9; Matt. 19:4, 5; in regard to the story of paradise and the fall, compare Matt. 19:8; 1 Cor. 11:8, 9; John 8:44; Rom. 5:12 and following; 2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:14; the story of the temptation of Christ apparently is a complement to the story of the fall; in regard to the story of Cain and Abel, compare Matt. 23:35; Heb. 11:4; 12:24; 1 John 3:12; in regard to the story of the deluge and of Noah, compare Matt. 24:38, 39; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:6; 1 Pet. 3:20; Heb. 11:7; in regard to origin of heathendom after the dispersion, compare Rom. 1:21; regarding the story of Abraham and Isaac, compare Matt. 3:9; John 8:33—58; Matt. 16:9 and following; Rom. 4:1—24; Gal. 2:6—9; Heb. 11:8—20; James 2:21—24; regarding the story of Jacob and Esau, compare Rom. 9:10—13; Heb. 11:20; 12:16, 17; regarding the story of Joseph, compare Heb. 11:21, 22; regarding Israel's sojourn in Egypt, compare Heb. 11:21, 22; (Matt. 2:15); Heb. 11:26; regarding the story of Moses' youth, his acknowledgement of Israel as his people up to Israel's exodus from Egypt, compare Heb. 11:23—29; Acts 7:20—36; 1 Cor. 10:1, 2; regarding Israel's preservation in the wilderness, the eating of manna, and the drinking from the rock, compare John 6:31—51; 1 Cor. 10:3—5; regarding the story of the giving of the law through Moses at Sinai, compare John 1:17; Gal. 3:15—24; Acts 7:38 (2 Cor. 3:7—15); regarding the stories from the giving of the law to Moses' death, compare John 3:14; 1 Cor. 10:5—11; Heb. 3:15—4:9. What Jesus and His apostles regarded as history, in part as fundamental history, it is safe to say Christians can never regard as myths and legends.

When the statement is made that the five books of Moses were constructed from various contradictory sources, and that therefore the unity of composition is impaired, there is probably so much truth to it that various records were at hand when Moses wrote the books. In Numbers 21:14, 15, one such record is even mentioned, and Moses refers to it. Moses may have had a record of what constitutes the chief contents of Genesis, for the art of writing was wide-spread in the patriarchal age, and the patriarchs surely were familiar with it. There is no reason why they should not have registered in writing the significant revelations they had experienced, or the stories their fathers had told them from the time of creation to their own days (Adam lived 56 years together with Lamech, the father of Noah, and Noah many years with Terah, the father of

Abraham). Why should Joseph alone have neglected to record his experiences when people were so fond of writing in Egypt? The whole question, however, gets an entirely different aspect when it is asserted that contradictions crept into the writings and that Moses sacrificed the unity of composition when he made use of or incorporated these ancient records. This is an assertion that has not been proved. When Moses perused the source-books that may have been at his disposal and even incorporated them in his history he was under an unique influence of the Spirit of God; the Spirit influenced him to receive and adopt only what agreed literally with actual facts, or He prompted him to mould it in such a way that it appeared as new and was wholly trustworthy. Does not Paul in 2 Tjm. 3:16 say that every scripture "is inspired of God?" That includes the five books of Moses. And how often does not the New Testament refer to various passages in these books and quote them as Holy Scriptures and the Word of God? (For instance Acts 7:2, 3; Gal. 3:8; Rom. 4:3.)

When reference is made to the fact that there is a variation in the use of the name of God, that in some passages only the name "God" and in others only the name "Jahve" is used, and from that it is argued that there must be a variety of authors, the significant fact is being overlooked that the same King David has composed psalms in which only the name of "God" appears (for instance Psalm 51) and others which contain only the name "Jahve," and it is manifestly unfair to conclude a variety of authors for the five books of Moses from the same premises. And though it is true that in many sections a diversity in the usage of language can be discovered this diversity is sufficiently accounted for by the diversity of the contents. Even in modern authors diversity in usage and mode of presentation is traceable to the diversity of contents. Who can today still be surprised to find that the whole mode of presenting the law in the fifth book of Moses differs from the related parts in the second, third and fourth books? We need only remember that Moses is speaking as a law-giver in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, while in Deuteronomy we hear the father who just before his death is interpreting the laws previously given, and urging the keeping of them upon his children.—Again, when it is asserted that passages occur which Moses could not have written, passages like Num. 12:3 or Ex. 6:26, 27, it must be said that the former passage may be translated "Moses was much worried"—a fact which Moses could properly testify of himself—, instead of "Moses was very meek"

which does sound rather strange as coming from Moses himself. The strangeness of the latter passage vanishes when we remember the reason that actuated Moses so to write. After an absence of forty years Moses appears before the people as a stranger. In that case it was perfectly proper to insert his genealogy as his credentials in order that Israel and the reader of the book might learn who it really was whom God had sent them as a savior. There are indeed a few passages that can hardly have been written in Moses' time; they are later, explanatory additions, perhaps at first written in the margin and later added to the text. Such are: Gen. 12:6 and 13:7—"The Canaanites were **then** in the land" or Deut. 3:14.

Usually the testimony of a book concerning itself is considered as perfectly sufficient. What do the five books of Moses say concerning their author? It is true that no statement reading: These are the five books of Moses, occurs at the head of them all. However, and first, the fifth book of Moses is introduced with these words, These are the words which Moses spake unto all Israel beyond the "Jordan," hence, these words declare the authorship of Moses, compare also Deut. 31:24; secondly, of the laws contained in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, it is always explicitly stated that Moses received them of God; thirdly, of numerous sections it is said that Moses wrote them (for instance Ex. 24:4; Num. 33:2), and of others that God commanded Moses to write them (for instance Ex. 34:27); fourthly, in Deut. 1:5 we read that Moses began to read "this law;" this cannot refer to what follows and constitutes the contents of Deuteronomy, for Deuteronomy does not contain the law, but a repetition and interpretation of the law; it refers to the law contained in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. Hence, Moses must have had these books in mind, but who should have written them, if not Moses himself? The four last books of Moses, therefore, point to Moses as the author of them. But the first book is so intimately related to the last four that they can hardly be severed from one another. If Moses is the author of the four last ones, he is also the author of the first book of Moses.—The Lord Jesus does not only declare that Moses **spoke** certain words (for instance Matt. 19:8), but that he also **wrote** them, and left writings behind, John 5:45—47; and these writings are none other than the five books of Moses.

The account of his death (Deut. 34) Moses, indeed, did not write himself; probably Joshua added it after his death.—A few explanatory remarks, in part already mentioned above, may indeed

have been added to the text, but the remainder can rightly claim the authorship of Moses.

Questions:—1. What title do the first five books of our Bible bear?—2. Who placed that title?—3. How might this title be interpreted?—4. What two reasons speak against this interpretation?—5. What is the real interpretation?—6. Name some of the objections negative criticism has raised during the last century against the Mosaic authorship!—7. For what two reasons can a Christian never consent to their last contention?—8. How much truth is there to their second assertion?—9. What fact has escaped negative critics in this connection?—10. Prove by example that the variation in the use of the name of God is no reason to accept a variety of sources!—11. Why does not even diversity in the use of language force us to adopt the theory that the five books of Moses rest on various sources?—12. What particular passages, too, do not necessarily point to another author than Moses?—13. What testimony of a biblical book is usually regarded as sufficient to indicate its author?—14. What about the testimony of the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy concerning themselves?—15. Why does that at the same time indicate the Mosaic authorship of Genesis?—16. What does the Lord Jesus say on this question?—17. What may Joshua or some other man have added to Moses' writings?—18. What may, therefore, remain our final conviction?

The Book of Joshua.

The **Book of Joshua** contains the immediate continuation of the history of Israel as reported in the Books of Moses. Under Moses God miraculously delivered Israel from the bondage of Egypt, chose it as His people at Sinai, gave to it regulations for its entire life in His law, and then led it victoriously to the Jordan, the very threshold of the land of Canaan. Joshua was destined to bring the work to completion. He was to lead Israel across the Jordan, conquer the land already promised the fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and divide it among the 12 tribes, to be their home for all time to come. How this was done is told us in the Book of Joshua. Accordingly the book is divided into two parts. The first part describes the victorious conquest of the land (chapters 1—12), and the second its division among the tribes of Israel (chapters 13—22). It tells the story so, that God's doings are everywhere in the forefront. As it was **God** and

not Moses who delivered Israel from Egypt, made it the chosen people, and brought it to the Jordan, thus it is not Joshua but **God** who leads it across the Jordan, extirpates the Canaanites and gives the land to Israel. He thereby also fulfills the promise which He had given the people under Moses and also to the fathers. It is this faithfulness of God, with which He confirms His word, that the book emphasizes. "There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass" (21: 45). But this faithfulness of God obligates Israel also to faithfulness towards God. How Joshua can not depart this life without first admonishing Israel to such faithfulness, is shown in the two last chapters of the book (Chapt. 23—24).

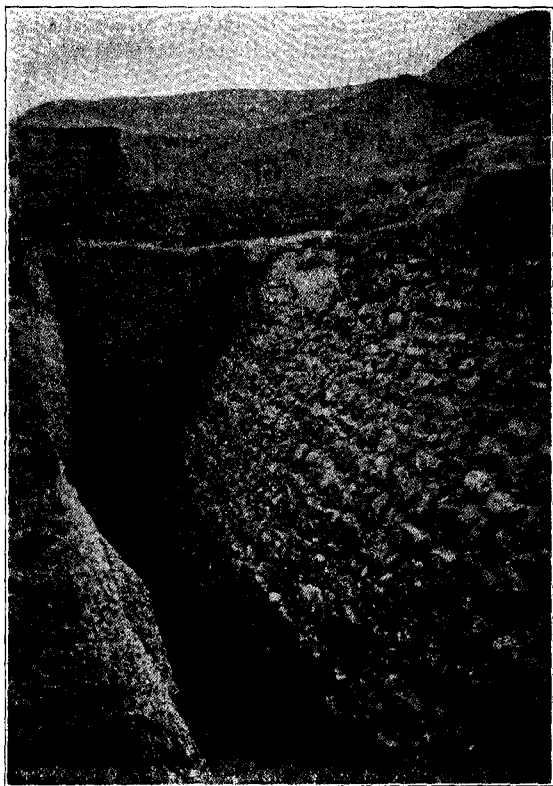
The Conquest of the Land, 1: 1—12, 24.—Read 1: 1—18; 3: 1—17; 4: 1—24; 5: 1—27; 10: 1—14; 11: 1—12.

In Egypt Israel had grown into a nation, at Sinai it received its law, its constitution, its forms of worship, its sanctuary. Now only one thing was lacking for them to become an independent people: a **country** corresponding to its purpose and the divine aim. The country east of the Jordan had already been conquered, but this was not sufficient for the whole people. And besides it had already been given by Moses to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh as their heritage (see page 159). Nor yet was this the land promised the fathers. That was situated on the west side of the Jordan. And this must now be conquered. This was no easy task, for it was inhabited by many war-like and war-trained Canaanites, who dwelt in strongly fortified cities. It devolved upon Joshua, the successor of Moses, to fill the whole people with the proper courage for this stupendous undertaking. God Himself encouraged Joshua, 1. by the words of encouragement **which** He spoke in His three-fold exhortation, "Be strong and of good courage!" (1: 1—9); 2. by the willingness to obey which He called forth in the hearts of the captains of the people (1: 10—18); 3. by the good news which He caused the spies to bring, whom Joshua had sent to Jericho and who stopped with Rahab. "Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all of the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us!" (2: 24). The spies no doubt stopped with a harlot, because they reasoned, that here their stopping would excite the least attention and suspicion. And Rahab

together with her house was not only saved through the faith which she confessed (2:9-13) and evidenced through her conduct (2:15, 16; comp. James 2:25), but through her marriage with Salmon of the tribe of Judah she even became the ancestress of David and thus of Christ, Matth. 1:15.

And God encouraged Joshua and the people, 1. through the wonderful passage through the Jordan, which could not but remind every one of the passage through the Red Sea (Chapt. 3); and 2. through the wonderful capture of the city of Jericho (chapt. 6). **The passage through the Jordan** is all the more wonderful and all the more comparable to the passage through the Red Sea, because it took place in the spring at the close of the rainy season, when the river in that section is from 10 to 12 feet deep and develops a swift current. At the Red Sea it was Moses' staff which caused the waters to stand like walls on both sides. And here the waters from the north stood still as soon as the priests, carrying the ark of the covenant, stepped into the water. For the ark denotes the presence of God. Thus it was God Himself before whom the northern waters stood still and the southern were swept away, so that the people could pass through with dry feet and step upon the promised land. Granted that the dry passageway was about 8 miles in length, the passage could be completed in about half a day. Here also, like the exodus from Egypt, it was a test of faith for Joshua and the people. They must trust Jahve that He is also the Lord over the waters of the Jordan. They stood the test in every way, both Joshua and the people, for they were still in the first youthful flush of faith, without which the conquest of the country would have been impossible. Only true faith clings to the omnipotence of God, even in the face of difficulties and confronted by enemies. Israel had developed such heroism of faith during the last victorious attacks of Moses upon the nations of the land east of the Jordan. And as they there sang a hymn of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for His deed of deliverance (Ex. 15), so here, too, a memorial of twelve stones was erected in the middle of the river and one on the western bank, in order to keep alive with coming generations the grateful remembrance of this wonderful deed. But before they penetrated farther into the land it devolved upon them to make up for things neglected in the wilderness (circumcision) (Josh. 5:2-9), and to celebrate the Passover (Josh. 5:10). If the circumcision of the people was a new test of faith, since through it its war-like men became unfit for battle for several days and thus were liable to defeat by the people of Canaan, the celebration of the Passover with its

memories of the judgments over Egypt for the good of Israel was the best strengthening of the faith. As God had then most terribly punished the enemies of Israel, but saved them through great signs and wonders, why should He not do the same thing now, extinguish the



Excavation of the Ancient Walls of Jericho Showing the Strong Buttresses. 9th Cent. B. C.

people of Canaan, give their land to Israel, and thus bring the good work to a successful close? Israel could now bake its unleavened bread from the grain of Canaan, hence it no longer needed the wonder-bread of the wilderness, the manna (Josh. 5:12). **The conquest**

of Jericho, the key to the whole country, is introduced through the appearance of an angel, "the captain of the Lord's host," who reveals to Joshua God's plan for the taking of the city (5:13-6:5). It was, no doubt, the same messenger of God who appeared to the patriarchs as "the angel of the Lord" (Gen. 16:7-14; 22:15 following), and who went before Moses (Ex. 23:20-22). He was an angel like other angels, but God chose him to make Himself visible in him. This accounts for the fact that in the continuation of the story Jahve Himself is directly named in his place (for inst. Ex. 3:2-4). Here he appears in a war-like form with a war-like title (captain or prince over the host of the Lord), because he must now precede Israel as a victorious leader. In him, however, Jahve Sabaoth (the Lord of hosts) Himself leads Israel and fights its battles. And in the taking of Jericho, which follows, He manifests His superior presence to all His enemies. This taking of the city transpired in such an extraordinary way, without a sword being drawn on the part of Israel (6:3-20), that (like the wonderful passage through the Jordan) it might be made plain to the dullest eye among Canaanites and the most timid heart in Israel, that the Lord Himself is battling for Israel. It was meant to discourage the Canaanites and encourage the Israelites. At the same time the latter were to be kept from a foolhardy trust in their own powers. If they had succeeded in taking this fortified city through their own power, they would soon have forgotten that they can do nothing without the Lord. Canaan was to be their property but not through the military genius of Joshua nor the military strength of Israel, but only through the hand of God. It was to be a free gift of His grace, which they could only then truly possess, if they perceived it in faith (Hebr. 11:30). Thus here, too, everything was based on God's grace and man's faith, as it was after the fall of man (page 50), with Noah (page 55), at the time of the patriarchs (pages 68, 72), and the day of Moses (pages 111f. 126). That Israel can do nothing of its own power, not even against so small and weak a city, like Ai, when it depends only on itself, and does not give itself over to the Lord with all its people, and does not seek selfish ends, was soon painfully brought to its consciousness, and a warning example set in guilty Achan according to the order of God (7:1-8, 29). To relegate the story of the wonderful taking of Jericho into the realm of fiction, because it appears as impossible to human reason, means nothing less than to doubt the omnipotence of God. Of course, God does not do such miracles every day, but only at certain times and for certain purposes. But where it is a matter of realizing His

thoughts of judgment or salvation for men, there He also proves Himself the God who does wonders. Jericho was to be punished (later more), and the leading of Israel into the land of promise was an important step in carrying out and realizing His thoughts of salvation for men.—After the taking of Jericho and Ai, Joshua penetrated to the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim (Grissim), here offered a thank offering to the Lord, and, according to Moses' instructions (Deut. 27:4), engraved the law on large stones, and before the assembled tribes of Israel called out the blessings and the cursings (Josh. 8:30—35).

Questions:—1. What book follows the five books of Moses?
—2. What is its contents?—3. Into how many parts is it divided?
—4. How far does the first part extend?—5. What is its contents?
—6. How far does the second part extend?—7. What is its contents?
—8. What is most forcibly brought out in all its narratives?
—9. What does the book therefore emphasize when it tells the story of the conquest of the land and its division among the tribes?—10. To what should Israel now feel in duty bound when God in his faithfulness has given them all He had ever promised?
—11. In what chapters had Joshua once reminded all the people of this?—12. At Moses' death, what alone was lacking that Israel might be an independent people?—13. What part of the country had already been conquered before Moses' death?—14. What part were they now to conquer under the leadership of Joshua?
—15. How many things did God do in order to encourage Joshua in his difficult task?—16. Which are they?—17. Through what two wonderful deeds did God encourage the people?—18. What fact makes the passage through the Jordan the more wonderful?
—19. Of what other miracle of God were the Israelites thus reminded?—20. How were the waters parted in this case?—21. Why did the waters part just at the time when the priests with the ark of the covenant stepped into the water?—22. In what respect was the passage through the Jordan a test of faith for Joshua and the people?—23. How did God make it easier for the people to trust it to Him, that He could and would lead them through the Jordan?—24. What was Israel to do in order to keep this miraculous deed of God ever vivid in the memory of the people?—25. What had Israel neglected to do during the wandering in the wilderness which it was now required to do?
—26. Why was a new test of faith connected with this act of circumcision?—27. In what respect was the observance of the passover at this time a strengthening of their faith?—28. What did Israel cease to eat after they had crossed the Jordan?—29. What was the next event by which God strengthened Israel's faith that their invasion of Canaan would be a success?—30. Why was the conquest of Jericho an event of great importance?—31. How was this event introduced?—32. Who was the angel that revealed to Joshua God's plans for the capture of the city?

—33. Why did he appear to Joshua in war-like form?—34. In the conquest of Jericho, what made it appear very plainly that God was present and active in Israel?—35. What effect upon the Canaanites was intended by this wonderful capture of Jericho?—36. And what effect was it to have on Israel?—37. What foolish notion was thereby to be discouraged among Israelites?—38. What attribute of God was again given greatest prominence?—39. And what attitude of man was again stressed?—40. Show that after the fall of man, with Noah, at the time of the patriarchs and in the days of Moses everything, too, was based on God's grace and man's faith!—41. How was it soon after clearly demonstrated to Israel that it can do nothing in its own power?—42. To what does it lead to maintain that the wonderful taking of Jericho is impossible?—43. In reality the conquest of Jericho fits well into God's usual interference by miracles; prove that such is the case!—44. How far could Joshua penetrate into the land after the capture of Jericho and Ai?—45. What did he do here to testify that henceforth no other law should be recognized in Canaan but the law of God?

Thus the conquest of the country had an auspicious beginning, but, of course, only a beginning. Since only the powerful city of Gibeon surrendered voluntarily and through craft obtained protection against destruction (chapt. 9), a war of about 7 years was necessary before the whole country was in Israel's hands. Chapter 12 enumerates all the kings (i. e., princes over individual cities and smaller sections) conquered by Joshua. As a rule Joshua was forced to battle against single cities, yet now the kings of the south had formed an alliance under the leadership of the king of Jerusalem. But notwithstanding this alliance and the unification of their military resources they were defeated at Gibeon. They fell by Israel's sword and still more under the hail of heaven (Josh. 10:1-11).

Here it was where Joshua in the heat of battle and in order completely to vanquish the enemy spoke the well known word, "**Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon!**" And the Lord did lengthen the day sufficiently so that all enemies were destroyed (10:12-14). And if here, too, it has been claimed, that a lengthening of the day in such a manner is impossible, for it is contrary to every law of nature, the fact has again been overlooked, that our God is an almighty God, who as the Creator of the laws of nature is also their lord. Of course, we do not know what combination of natural laws God, who called them into being, brought about, in order to realize this change, but we know enough of God's mysteries in nature, reverently to let others which are not yet opened to us stand as such. But if some one takes offence at the fact that

God here condescended to lengthen the light of day at a man's prayer, then let him remember the inexpressible grace, with which God otherwise also condescends to sinners and hears the prayers of His children, and let us bear in mind the purposes for which God here condescended, and the power which He ascribes to faith, Mark 11:23,24. And if any one seeks to deduce all kinds of conclusions from Joshua's word of faith regarding the correctness or incorrectness of the system of Copernicus, according to which one can not speak of the sun moving or standing still, then he overlooks the fact that this word of Joshua is taken from a hymn in the "Book of Jasher" (10:13) (perhaps a continuation of the lost book mentioned in Num. 21:14, "the book of the wars of the Lord," comp. 2 Sam. 1:18), and thus is clothed in poetical form, and that Joshua expressed himself according to his ideas and the ideas of his time concerning the sun and moon. We to the present day speak of the "sun rising and setting" and yet need not for that reason deny the correctness of the Copernican system. This command of faith is worded as men spoke of sun and moon in Joshua's day; but God carried it out in His own manner as to accomplish what Joshua desired.

Following the example of the kings of the south the kings of the north also combined against Joshua under Jabin of Hazor. But they were annihilated at the waters of Merom (chapt. 11). This practically put the country into the hands of Israel even though the Canaanites still possessed some cities, and the power of the Philistines in the southwest was not yet broken. Reuben, Gad, and one half of Manasseh could now return to the land east of the Jordan. They had fulfilled their promise (page 159). The sanctuary, the tabernacle, which bound all 12 tribes into one unity, was planted at Shiloh, between Bethel and Shechem (Josh. 18:1).

According to God's command the conquered Canaanites were exterminated (Josh. 6:17, 24; 10:26; 11:11, 12; Num. 33:52—56). That seems cruel and unjust. Yes, it seems that since Israel then took possession of their land, as if the whole future history of Israel is built up on this cruelty and injustice. But let us remember, 1. that God alone is the lord of the earth and divides it as He sees fit; 2. that the Canaanites themselves were not the original owners of the country, but on their part had seized it with violence and driven the Rephaim out (Deut. 2:10, 11, 20; 3:11); and 3. that they justly merited complete extinction because of their grievous sins. When God led Abraham into the land of Canaan their sins were already grievous and great, but "the iniquity of the Amorites (i. e., in this place

the same as Canaanites) is not yet full" (Gen. 15:15, 16). Sodom and Gomorrah then were a warning example for them. The Dead Sea, which covers these places, daily called them to repentance. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob proclaimed the Name of the living God among them through word and deed. But the Canaanites totally disregarded this, and sank down deeper into the mire of idolatry and the heinous sins of flagrant sexual lust connected therewith. The measure of their sins was filled to the brim. God's patience came to an end. They must be extinguished. Israel became their messengers of judgment. God also used other nations for the same purpose even though they did not know it. Israel should and must know that it is the rod of judgment in God's hand, for it was to learn how God hates and punishes the sin of idolatry, and it must keep from it itself. To them it was said expressly, "And if it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish, because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God" (Deut. 8:19, 20). What is now given to them as a free gift of God's grace without any merit on their part, shall then be taken from them and given to others, for "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

2. The Division of the Land, chapters 13-22.

After the conquest Joshua divided the land west of the Jordan by lot among the 9½ tribes. First of all Caleb received his reward for the faithfulness, which he showed as a spy (Num. 14). He was given Hebron (Josh. 14:6 and the following). Then the two principal tribes, namely Judah and Joseph (i. e., Ephraim and one half of Manasse) received their share (15-17). And from Shiloh, where the tabernacle was planted, after a careful survey of the whole land, the other tribes also received their inheritance (18-19). The free cities or cities of refuge were named, and the 48 cities for the tribe of Levi were designated (20-21).

In order to fortify Israel in its fidelity towards the Lord Joshua after a long period of peace and rest assembled the elders of the people and the whole people at Shechem at the end of his life (chapt. 23, 24). He showed them how wonderfully God had guided them from the calling of Abraham to the conquest of the land of Canaan, in order to invite them to an unmovable and unreserved faithfulness towards the God of their covenant and salvation. "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord," he said to them, "choose you this day whom

ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell." And he added, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!" (24:14, 15). Then all the people answered, "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods; therefore will we also serve the Lord, for He is our God." Thus Joshua renewed the covenant with the people and erected a memorial to commemorate the event. Soon after he died. Brave as a soldier, ingenious as a statesman, faithful and obedient to God during his whole life, Joshua is one of the most fascinating personalities in the entire history of Israel, a worthy successor of a great master. He led Israel to its earthly home, and thus became a prototype of another Joshua (Jesus, Greek form of Joshua), who will lead His people into the eternal rest (Hebr. 4:8, 9).

Questions:—1. Into how many parts is the book of Joshua divided?—2. How far does the first part extend?—3. Of what does the first part tell?—4. How far does the second part extend?—5. What does it tell?—6. By what was the conquest of the land west of the Jordan victoriously initiated?—7. How far had Joshua advanced after the capture of Jericho and Ai?—8. By what stratagem did the city of Gibeon obtain protection against destruction?—9. What punishment of servitude was meted out to the Gibeonites for their treachery?—10. Against what two combined armies did Joshua have to fight later on in order to gain the mastery of the land?—11. Where did Joshua defeat the allied kings of the South?—12. How did God Himself bring about their defeat?—13. What prayer did Joshua pray toward evening that the victory might be a complete one?—14. And what really happened?—15. What three objections are usually raised against this event?—16. What do they fail to remember who claim that such a thing is contrary to all the laws of nature?—17. What they, who think that God surely would not so greatly interfere with the usual order of things on the simple petition of one man?—18. Where does Jesus ascribe a similar power to faith?—19. Why, too, is it wrong to appeal to the system of Copernicus, according to which Joshua's petition is impossible, since the sun neither rises nor sets?—20. Where was another alliance of kings formed?—21. Where was it defeated?—22. Why did this victory not put the whole land into the hand of Israel?—23. The power of what people especially was not broken?—24. Who were to conquer the remaining cities and tribes?—25. What was to form the central sanctuary of Israel, whether the tribes lived east or west of the Jordan?—26. Where did they place the tabernacle?—27. What was Israel to do with all the Canaanites?—28. Why was that not unjust?—Give the reason!—29. Demonstrate that God had warned the Canaanites since the days of Abraham to desist from sin!—30. As what only did

Israel serve when they extirpated the Canaanites?—31. And what lesson was Israel to be taught at the same time?—32. Where did Moses tell them so in advance?—33. What do chapters 13—22 narrate?—34. How was the land divided among the tribes?—35. Why were only nine and one half tribes considered when the land west of the Jordan was divided?—36. What did Caleb receive?—37. Why was he given Hebron?—38. What two principal tribes were provided for first?—39. At what center was the division for the remaining tribes made?—40. What did the tribe of Levi receive?—41. What are we to understand by the cities of refuge that were selected?—42. What did Joshua do before his death in order to fortify Israel in their fidelity toward God?—43. By what did Joshua tenderly invite Israel to choose fidelity toward God?—44. And when Israel consented, what was renewed?—45. What did he erect in order to remind later generations of this renewal of the covenant?—46. Give a brief character-sketch of Joshua!—47. What is the relation between the name of Joshua and that of Jesus?—49. In what respect is Joshua a type of the Christ?

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Geography of Palastine

Since **Canaan** is the land in which Israel was destined to live, it is well and meet to add something here about its name, location, and conditions.

The original name is **Canaan**, from the Canaanites (comp. Gen. 10: 15—19), the inhabitants during historic times. Prior to them the Rephaim seem to have lived there (see above). According to Gen. 12: 7, it is called the "promised land." The prophets call it the "holy land" (Zechariah 2: 12), "the Lord's land" (Hosea 9: 3), "the glorious land" (Dan. 11: 16). Joseph calls it the "land of the Hebrews" (Gen. 40: 15); during the time of the kings it was called the "land of Israel." After the exile the Romans called it "Judaea" after the leading tribe. Among the Greeks already the name is found, which finally became quite common, namely "Palestine." This name originated in "Philistineland."

As to **location** and **boundaries** Canaan or Palestine on the whole designates the southern third of the plateau washed by the eastern extreme of the Mediterranean Sea. In fact this sea forms the western boundary and the Syro-Arabian desert the eastern. The limits on the north and south are not so sharply marked. Yet the southern boundary can either be designated as extending from the mouth of the Brook of Egypt (= Wady El-Arish) over Eboda to the east, or through the valley (salt valley), stretching out from west to east at

Beersheba. In the north the Leontes River and the Hermon mountains form the boundary. It comprises only about 12,000 square miles and is about as large as the State of Maryland.

The whole is an unified mountainous plateau, cut into two halves by the deep valley of the Jordan, namely the east and west Jordan land. The **plain of the Jordan** running south extends from the foot of Mt. Hermon to the Dead Sea, the basin is called "Arabah" and reaches to the Gulf of Akaba. It covers an area of from 3 to 9 miles in width and in its southern part it is one of the deepest basins in the world, for the Dead Sea in which it ends lies 1300 feet below sea level, and is the deepest spot on the earth. The farther south it extends, the higher the rock bound walls that enclose it on both sides. No wonder, that from the lake of Gennesaret to the south, where west winds never blow, the heat grows so intense in the summer time that there is scarcely any vegetation. This accounts for the fact that at all times there were scarcely any cities and towns, no great public thoroughfares, and only a few roadways. Only the immediate vicinity of the river, which was regularly flooded by the high waters, shows a rich vegetation, oleanders, willows, tamarisks, laurels, pistacias, acacias, etc., the "glory of the Jordan" (Zech. 11: 3; Jer. 12: 5; 49: 19), where wild animals, at one time including lions, roamed. Where there are springs, as at Jericho, indigo, cotton, and sugar cane thrive even with tropical heat.

The **plateau west of the Jordan valley**, when viewed as a whole, is much like an inclined roof, which drops from its ridge, the watershed, to the east and west, precipitously on the east side, gradually on the west; only that the ridge of this roof is no straight line, but one which has its highest points at the north and south ends, about 3000—3600 feet high, but measuring from the north to the south sinks about 1500 feet after its first third. By the valley of Jezreel, which cuts through the plateau, and has an elevation of only 180—225 feet above sea level, the west Jordan highland is cut into two, in extent very unlike halves, the southern and northern highland, or, to use terms very common in later days, the **highland of Judaea and Samaria**, and the **Galilean highland or hill country**. If we follow the entire group of mountain ridges from the south to the north, we can differentiate as follows: the highland of Hebron (about 2700 feet high, its highest point 3000 feet), the highland of Jerusalem (about 2200 feet high, Mount of Olives 2450, Nebi Samwil almost 2700), the highland of Bethel (the highest point, Tell Asur nearly 3000), the hill country of Samaria (Gerizim about 2500, Ebal about 3000, plain of Dothan only



about 750), which to the northwest loses itself in the ridge of Carmel (1650) and to the northeast in the mountains of Gilboa (1550). North of the plain of Jezreel is the south Galilean plateau with the hill country of Nazareth (1680), the hill country of Turan (1620), the highland Esh-Shaghur and the plain of Ramah (1100) closing off the whole. The north Galilean highland, considerably higher, rises to the north of the plain of Ramah to a height of 3150 feet in Nebi Heider and in Dshebel Dshermak almost 3600. The Judean highland is broadly rounded and usually barren but with splendid grazing places, the highland of Samaria, however, is more cut up, friendlier and more fertile. The plain of Jezreel is renowned for its fertility. The south Galilean hill country consists of many ridges, extending from the west to the east, between which there are broad and fertile valleys. The north Galilean highland is much more massive and is noted for its picturesque variety of hills and valleys, much water and productive soil.

Between the sea and the west Jordan plateau there are broader and narrower plains stretching down to the coast, interrupted only by Mt. Carmel which reaches almost to the sea. North of Carmel is the plain of Accho. It is a very fertile country but was never fully occupied by the tribe of Asher. South of Carmel the plain of Sharon stretches out as far as Joppa, and then comes the plain of Sephela, reaching down to the southern end of Palestine. The plain of Sharon, which was always fully in the possession of Israel, although it presents on its surface only sand, deposited there by the action of the water, and the good soil is found only at a depth of one and one-half feet, was always a most productive section owing to the plenteous supply of water. Grass, indeed, dries up completely during the summer-time, yet when the "early rains" come in October it rapidly grows. At Easter time it is so high that only the beautiful white lily is higher, and millions upon millions of flowers give to the whole section a strange fascination. To the present day it is a grazing place for cattle and camels. Not a few parts also show healthy growth of trees, and cereals; fruits of all kinds, cotton, etc., thrive very well. —The plain of Sephela, always held by the Philistines, is a far reaching beautiful and fertile country, in the valley of which agricultural pursuits pay well. Many of its valleys to the present day present splendid fields of wheat, barley, and sesame. Many of its cities (Gaza) are situated in the midst of a veritable forest of olive and fruit trees. The sycamore with its almost indestructible wood is found in great abundance.



The **east Jordan plateau** is not cut up as the section west of the Jordan, only in the northern and far eastern part it rises to greater heights (Hauran plateau 5400 feet), but it is far more fertile and productive. It is divided into three parts. The first, passing from north to south, is **north of the Yarmuk river**. It reaches farthest to the east, includes the ancient Bashan, and reaches to the Hauran mountains. It is a section of great fertility. Here in former days the famous "oaks of Bashan" grew, and the equally famous "steers of Bashan" grazed. Its northern part affords splendid pasturage and its southern fine soil for agriculture. South of the Yarmuk is the second part, ancient **Gilead** (in the narrower sense) ending in the south with the valley of the Jabbok. It has a rawer climate than the section across the Jordan and much snowfall in the winter. But its fertility is luxuriant, its ridges usually covered with forests. It has many valleys, and still produces plenteous crops of cereals, olives, figs, almonds, and walnuts. The third part stretches out between the Jabbok and the Arnon and is called the plateau of **Belka**. Because of its plenteous rainfall this section is also very fertile, and in addition to splendid grazing lands includes much rich soil for agricultural purposes. In former days its wheat was renowned, and to the present day fruit and wine thrives.

Questions:—1. What different names were given to the land that Israel now occupied?—2. Who named it Judaea?—3. Whence was the name Palestine derived?—4. Where is the land of Canaan or Palestine situated?—5. What are its boundaries to the east, west, south, and north?—6. How large is it?—7. What general description can you give of it?—8. What divides the plateau into two parts?—9. How far from the north to the south does the plain of the Jordan extend?—10. How wide is it?—11. What is its depth?—12. By what is it enclosed especially in the south?—13. What do you know of the temperature in this valley?—14. What does its situation and temperature account for?—15. What do the Scriptures understand by the "glory of the Jordan"?—16. What thrives in the neighborhood of Jericho because springs are found there?—17. With what may the plateau west of the Jordan be compared?—18. How does it drop toward the east?—19. And how toward the west?—20. To what altitude does the ridge rise that traverses from north to south to the land west of the Jordan?—21. Where are its highest peaks?—22. Where is the greatest depth of this ridge?—23. What valley divides the plateau west of the Jordan into two very unequal halves?—24. What is the southern half called?—25. And what the northern half?—26. Enumerate from north to south the mountain ridges that we may differentiate in the plateau west of the Jordan!—27. What is the highest peak in the land?—28. Describe

the chief highlands, the Judæan, that of Samaria, the north, and the south Galilaean!—29. What is found between the sea and the plateau?—30. What ridge alone reaches to the sea?—31. What three plains are discernible?—32. Where are they situated?—33. Describe each one!—34. How is the land east of the Jordan distinguished from that west of the Jordan?—35. Into what three parts is it divided?—36. Describe each one!

The country has but few great rivers. The largest is the **Jordan**. Yet the Jordan has but little value for purposes of traffic or for irrigation. From the lake of Gennesaret on its drop is too great. It has many waterfalls and sinuosities, and the land on both sides is wild and dry (comp. Jordan valley, page 222). It finds its source in the numerous springs of the Anti-Libanon. Its upper part extends to the swamp lake of Merom (6 feet above sea level), its short middle section drops to the lake of Gennesaret (over 600 feet below sea level), its lower section rushes along to the Dead Sea, often between naked cliffs and with many turnings and bendings and including over 30 cataracts and falls. Its sources are about 1000 feet above sea level and its mouth 1300 feet below, so that its fall in a distance of about 134 miles is not less than 2300 feet. In reality its course is far longer. On account of its sinuosities it is about 200 miles in length. Only two of its tributaries are always filled with water, the **Yarmuk** and the **Jabbok**, both of them coming from the east. The **Arnon** also comes from the east and empties into the Dead Sea. Most of the creeks and streams flowing towards the Mediterranean Sea are dry in the summer time, with the exception of the **Kishon** in its lower part and the **Nahr el' Auja** north of Joppa. These always contain flowing water. The latter next to the Jordan is the deepest river of Palestine. Of lakes, the Merom lake, the lake of Gennesaret (Galilean Sea, and Sea of Tiberias) and the Dead Sea (Salt Sea) require consideration. The lake of **Merom** has the shape of a triangle, about three miles in width on the north side and about four miles long from where the Jordan enters until it leaves again. It is more a swamp than a lake. The lake of **Gennesaret** is about 13 miles in length and 7 miles in width in its widest place. Its depth varies between 100 and 160 feet. Its surface is about 682 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. Enclosed on all sides by mountains rising to precipitous heights on the east side, there is yet room for villages and cities, especially on the west side where the valleys end. And here in ancient times many such were located, some of them very populous. The wealth of fish (especially in the northern section) and the great public highway and

route of traffic leading past its west shore invited settlers. On account of its low location a warm climate prevails so that tropical fruits can be raised. Hot water springs on its west shore (especially at Tiberias) reach a temperature of 137° Fahrenheit.—The **Dead Sea**, into which the Jordan empties is 46 miles in length and from 5 to 9 miles in width. It lies so deep (1300 feet below the Mediterranean) that travellers coming from Jerusalem, about 24 miles distant, must descend 3600 feet. Whereas the depth in the northern part varies from 600 to 1300 feet, in the southern part, there where the land thrusts itself in upon its waters, it soon rises from 600 to 15 feet. In some spots in the southern part it is only $\frac{3}{4}$ feet deep. The sea has no outlet, although it receives its waters from all sides, and it is estimated that the daily volume of water emptying into its basin is $6\frac{1}{2}$ million tons. The intense heat in this narrow basin between the naked cliffs and rocks causes the water to evaporate so rapidly, that the sea in exceptional cases rises only 10 to 12 feet beyond its usual level. This constant evaporation has caused the water to become more lye-like from century to century, and especially so since there are vast deposits of rock salt especially in its southern section. The deeper the water the more salt laden it is, in its depths up to 28 per cent. The preponderance of mineral substances in the water easily explains why the human body will not sink and without motion will float on its surface. Swimming under such conditions is very difficult and a bath does not refresh. And with this composition it is also easily understood why the sea is a "Dead Sea." Of course, that no vegetation thrives at its shores, no human being can live there for any time, and no bird can fly over its surface, is a myth. But this is true, that there is no organic life in its waters, that there was never a shell or a coral found, and that not only the sweet water fish of the Jordan but also salt water fish put into it immediately die. The southern part of the sea is rich in asphalt deposits, which are found in great abundance in its depths, and cakes of asphalt often float on the surface after a severe earthquake. The surroundings of the sea with its precipitous cliffs and rocks, higher on the east side than on the west, are not as gruesome as sometimes described. At one time there were settlements with considerable cultivation along its shores, and ships sailed over its waters, just as today ships again cross the sea.

The **climate** varies, but with its generally high altitude and the proximity of the Mediterranean Sea it is on the whole temperate and mild. The winds from the west and north temper the hot climate of the summer season, the southwest wind, however, brings much

warm humidity. The east wind is both rare and disagreeable in the summer time but in the winter time very welcome since it brings warmth. The southeast wind (sirocco) alone coming from the deserts brings about a sultry condition that is almost intolerable. The coldest month of the year is January, the hottest August; but September and October are still extraordinarily warm. The rainy season extends from October until May and includes about $6\frac{1}{2}$ months. It begins toward the end of October or beginning of November with the "early rains," and ends with the "later rains" in March or April. From the end of May to October is the dry season, July, August, and September being perfectly dry, yet now and then there is still a heavy dew. In the mountain sections there are snow-storms, rarer, however, in the lands west of the Jordan than in the east. Snow, however, rarely remains, and a frost is a rare thing even in the mountains. With its great variety of altitudes and temperatures the country shares in the flora and fauna of every zone.

Thus it can truly be said, it was a land both beautiful and good, to which God now brought His people through Joshua, there to find its home.

On the one hand Canaan was completely separated from all other nations in all four directions of the compass, in the west by the sea with only one part open at all times, namely Joppa, in the north by the mountains, in the east and south by the desert. On the other hand it was in touch with all civilized people of the ancient world, for it was the land that united Asia Minor with Egypt. This accounts for the important trade routes that crossed it. There are four of these of special importance. One crossed the land from east to west, and the other three passed from north to south. The east and west highway was in the north and passed from Accho at the sea, running south-east across the mountains through the section of Cana, then north-east to the lake of Gennesaret, crossed the Jordan south of the waters of Merom, until it reached Damascus, and from there ran on to the Euphrates. That was the route which in ancient times was taken especially by the armies coming from the Euphrates (Chedorlaomer, Gen. 14) to Palestine, and on which the later Europeans penetrated into the interior of Asia. At the lake of Gennesaret another road branched off which led to Tyre, the great harbor city and seaport of Phoenicia. Two of the three routes coming from the north traversed the country west of the Jordan and one the section east. The former two each started with the route running east and west, the one at Accho, the other at Lake Gennesaret. The road from Accho followed

the coast through the plains of Sharon and Sephela and led to Egypt. At Gaza it met another road coming from Jerusalem and one from Beersheba. The route branching off from the Accho-Euphrates route at Gennesaret passed almost through the center of the west Jordan plateau through Shechem, Jerusalem, Hebron, Beersheba, then by way of Rehoboth to Kadesh-Barnea, where it branched out and one route led to Egypt, the other to Elath at the head of the Gulf of Akaba. The route traversing the east Jordan land from north to south also branched off from the Accho-Euphrates route, but already at Damascus, passed from there through Bashan and Gilead, formed the connection with Jerusalem on the other side from Jericho, continued on the east side of the Dead Sea, and also led to Elath.—This geographical location corresponded best with Israel's calling. For it should at first be secluded from all other nations for centuries, and thus become the nursery for the future kingdom of God. And afterwards in the fullness of time it should be the bearer of salvation for all nations. The election of this people according to God's gracious plan was to be only a means of bringing back all people into His fellowship.

* * *

The **Book of Joshua** was not written by Joshua. It only bears this name, because Joshua is the principal person of whom the book reports. It would not have been necessary for him to appeal to the Book of Jasher (10:13), for he himself is the principal witness of the events recorded in 10:12–14. Besides, the conquest of Leshem (= Laish-Dan, Judges 18:27, 29), 19:47, came at a later date. But the writer unknown to us had notes of Joshua and contemporaries which he used (comp. Josh. 24:26). Chapters 13–22 are no doubt based on records of Joshua concerning the division of the country. The book received its present form before the taking of Jerusalem by David, 15:63. Perhaps Samuel compiled the existing records into our book of Joshua.

Questions:—1. Into what two large parts is the land of Canaan divided?—2. What separates these parts from one another?—3. What three plateaus are to be found west of the Jordan?—4. Into what three parts may the land east of the Jordan be divided?—5. What is the name of the largest river?—6. For what purposes is it of but little value?—7. What is the reason?—8. How far does the upper part extend?—9. How far the middle section?—10. And how far the lower section?—11. How great is the fall of the Jordan?—12. Name the two greatest tributaries!—13. What river besides the Jordan empties directly into the Dead Sea?—14. What distinguishes the waters east of the Jordan from those west of the Jordan?—15. What streams and creeks flowing

into the Mediterranean always, or usually contain flowing water?—17. Name the lakes of Palestine!—18. Describe the lake of Merom!—19. By what other name is the lake of Gennesaret known?—20. What are its dimensions and its depth?—21. How about the shores?—22. How do you account for it that in olden times largely inhabited cities were to be found on its western coast?—23. What do you know of the climate that prevailed here?—24. Where are hot springs to be found?—25. What are the dimensions of the Salt Sea?—26. How deep is the Salt Sea?—27. How great is the volume of water it receives daily?—28. What, however, does it lack?—29. What becomes of the great volume of water it receives?—30. What is the effect of this evaporation both on the sea and its surroundings?—31. What percentage of salt is found in its depth?—32. What does this fact explain?—33. Why is the sea rightly called Dead Sea?—34. What does the southern part of the sea produce abundantly?—35. How about the shores of this sea?—36. Describe the climate of Palestine!—37. The climate depends very much on the wind; tell how the wind from various directions influences the climate!—38. Which is the coldest month?—39. Which is the hottest?—40. How long does the rainy season last?—41. When do the early rains set in?—42. When the later rains?—43. What is the only refreshing thing during July, August and September?—44. How about snow and frost in Palestine?—45. What can you tell about the flora and fauna?—46. Show that Canaan was separated from other nations in all directions!—47. By what means could it, on the other hand, get in touch with all civilized peoples of the ancient world?—48. What trade route crossed the land from west to east?—49. In what respect had this trade route been of great importance?—50. How many of the trade routes running north and south crossed the land west of the Jordan?—51. Where was the starting point of each one?—52. Describe the route of the western one!—53. Describe the route of the eastern one!—54. Into what two routes does it branch out at Kadesh-Barnea?—55. Where does the route traversing the east Jordanland separate from the one running from west to east?—56. Where are they joined again?—57. In what way did Palestine's seclusion correspond with Israel's calling?—58. In what way, however, did its contact with the civilization of other nations through the trade-routes correspond equally as well with its calling?—59. Why is the biblical book we have just finished called the book of Joshua?—60. What passage proves that Joshua is not the author?—61. What clearly demonstrates, however, that records compiled by Joshua, and his contemporaries were used by the unknown writer?—62. When may the book have received its present form?—63. Why, before the taking of Jerusalem by David?—64. Who may have compiled the existing records into our Book of Joshua?

The Book of Judges.

The Book of Judges contains single sketches taken from the first three or four centuries of Israel's sojourn in the promised land. And these with all their variety illustrate the **one** truth: when Israel forsakes the Lord, its God, and serves other gods, God punishes it by giving it into the hands of its enemies. But when it returns to God in sincere repentance, it always experiences God's grace and salvation through some judge or savior chosen of God (comp. Judges 3:9).—The book is divided into three parts, 1. An introduction with a general description of the times of the judges, chapt. 1: 1—3:4; 2. Israel's tribulations brought about by its apostasy, and its deliverance through the judges, chapt. 3: 5—16: 31. 3. Two appendices important for the times, chapt. 17: 1—21: 35.

1. **The Introduction with a General Description of the Times of the Judges, 1: 1—3: 4.**—Read the entire section.

With Israel's induction into the land of Canaan and the division of the same among the individual tribes God had done everything necessary for a progressive development of its civic and political life. It possessed a country, productive above all others and at the same time demanding diligent labor, secluded from the rest of the world and yet at the same time united with it. It had a constitution which regulated its life down to the minutest detail with God as its head. It possessed a religion in which the living God Himself had revealed Himself and entered into a covenant with it, according to which it knew Him as the holy God who visits the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation, and yet also a gracious God who forgives sin and covers up iniquities, whenever men dedicate themselves to Him in living faith. It also possessed a visible center for its worship, namely the sanctuary at Shiloh, in the Most Holy of which God Himself dwelt in their midst, and the priesthood mediated between Him and them. The three great assemblies each year at the sanctuary were well adapted to foster the unity and oneness of the twelve tribes, just as the great convocations of the people from time to time fostered and strengthened the political unity (comp. Josh. 23:2; 1 Sam. 7:1, 2). The elders here and there

in the various cities and tribal sections rendered judgment. In important cases the Lord Himself decided by means of the Urim and Thummim, as He was ever ready and willing as the omnipotent and omnipresent, the gracious and merciful Lord of His people to help and save through deeds. Thus Israel was in a position to experience a history blessed and happy, and Moses' word in Deut. 33:29 should have been realized.

But the sins of the people frustrated all this. Joshua was unable to destroy all Canaanites. Their complete annihilation became the work of the individual tribes in whose territory they lived. This well corresponded to God's purpose, for God meant thereby to test and strengthen the faith and obedience of the individual tribes (2:22), and also to use these heathen people, which Israel did not destroy, as a scourge for His own people (Deut. 7:16; Num. 33:55; Josh. 23:13). From Judges 1:1-20 we learn how Judah and Simeon discharged the work assigned to them and even took the Philistine cities of Gaza, Ekron, and Askelon. But as even they did not succeed in fully annihilating, not even in fully subjecting all Canaanites living in their territory (1:19), we learn from 1:21-36, that the other tribes, and especially those who received their heritage in the northern sections of the country, took the matter with even less seriousness. Thus the Canaanites remained all over the country, in part as a subjected people, in part as citizens with equal rights, in part even as lords. And especially after the generation, which originally conquered the land or lived at the time had passed away (2:8-13), it came to pass that instead of annihilating the Canaanites they united and mixed with them. The Israelites entered into closest contact with them through marriage and social intercourse. But as a result they now also succumbed to the heathen temptation to idolatry, just as Moses, Joshua, and also the angel of the Lord (2:1-3) had predicted. The principal idols of the Canaanites were Baal, the sun god, and Ashtaroth, the moon goddess; of the Moabites Chemosh; of the Ammonites Moloch; of the Philistines Dagon; of the Midianites Baal-peor. All of them were personifications of the powers of nature. Instead of differentiating the generating, preserving, destroying powers of nature from the living and personal God who is behind them all and works and operates through them, they deified the powers of nature, and worshipped them as gods. And the worship of these gods usually consisted in orgies and dissolute revelry, in which the sins of sex were especially committed, yes, fornication was even looked upon as a part of the worship of these deities (Baal was regarded as the

personification of the male and Ashtarothe the female power). Even first-born children were sacrificed to Moloch. In participating in such heathen revelry and worship, the sanctuary at Shiloh lost its importance. In place of its tribal sanctuaries were erected here and there (comp. 8:24—27; 17:1—13). The law was openly transgressed, and hand in hand with this went a wide-spread moral decay. This corruption and decay even penetrated into the very sanctuary (1 Sam. 2:12—17, 22), and even the judges themselves often revealed a heathen mode of thought and action (Judges 8:24—27; 11:30—40). And as the religious unity began to crumble, the national unity among the tribes also grew weak. Mutual jealousy delivered individual parts of the people for a long time to heathen subjection (17:6). Thus the heathen people became a snare and their idols a net for Israel.

As a punishment for this God delivered sometimes the entire people, sometimes a part of them into the power of their neighboring people, even into the hands of such whom they had been called upon to extirpate but did not do so. These were especially the Mesopotamians, the Midianites, the Ammonites, and Moabites, who came from the east, the Canaanites (Phoenicians ?) from the north, the Philistines from the west. When Israel found itself subjected by one of these, and the oppression became intolerable, it bethought itself of its God and the history of the past, repented, and prayed for deliverance. And in His grace God forgave their sins, and appointed judges, i. e., leaders and saviors, who delivered and rescued them. Then they served God for a longer or shorter time by way of thanks, until levity and frivolity again gained the upper hand, and the former play began over again. Thus periods of apostacy and punishment changed off with those of repentance, deliverance and true worship, and it is the rapid return of this that gives to the period of the judges its singular character.

Questions:—1. How do we call that class of books that stands in first place in our Bibles?—2. Which are the first of the historical books of the Old Testament?—3. What historical book follows next?—4. Which is the third of the historical books of the Old Testament?—5. How much of sacred history do the five books of Moses tell us?—6. What does the book of Joshua relate?—7. And what is the contents of the book of Judges?—8. What truth do all the historical sketches of the book of Judges illustrate?—9. Into how many parts is it divided?—10. How far does the first part extend?—11. What is its contents?—12. Enumerate all those things with which God had endowed Israel that it might develop progressively in its civic and political life?—13. As what had He revealed Himself to them?—14.

Where would He dwell among the people and commune with them through the priests?—15. What was the two-fold object of the three annual assemblies at the sanctuary?—16. Who rendered judgment?—17. How was it possible to have God Himself decide in serious questions?—18. And by what means was He, the ever present One, ready to interfere at any time when necessary?—19. Who had foreseen the happiness Israel should have experienced under these circumstances?—20. What, however, frustrated it?—21. After Joshua's death, who were still present in the land agreeable to God's purposes?—22. What was God's two-fold purpose with the Canaanites that were still in the land?—23. What two tribes fulfilled their obligations after Joshua's death?—24. Even what cities did they take?—25. What proves, however, that they did not complete their work?—26. What was the situation among the other tribes?—27. What was the condition of the Canaanites that remained?—28. What even resulted from this condition in the following generations?—29. And to what did this contact lead?—30. Who had already foretold this?—31. Enumerate the chief idols whom many of the Israelites served?—32. How did this idol-worship originate among the Canaanites and others?—33. What was often connected with this worship of idols?—34. What even did the Ammonites sacrifice to Moloch, their idol?—35. What institution in Israel lost in importance the more Israel practiced idolatry?—36. What was erected in many places to take the place of the tabernacle?—37. And in Eli's time, what must be said even of the service in the sanctuary?—38. Deep religious and moral corruption was apparent; what, however, also grew weaker as the religious unity began to crumble?—39. What had the heathen nations thus become for Israel?—40. How did God punish Israel for its apostasy?—41. What peoples did God make use of as scourges?—42. What was usually the result of such oppression by the heathen?—43. Whom then did God in His grace appoint for Israel?—44. What then are we to understand by the "Judges" of which our biblical book speaks?—45. What again did Israel's levity lead them to after a season of obedience?—46. What rapidly recurring changes, therefore, filled out the three or four centuries which the narrative of the book of Judges covers?

2. Individual Examples of Tribulation and Deliverance, 3: 5—16:

31.—Read 4: 1—16; 5: 1—31; 6: 1—7: 25; 10: 6—11: 40; 13: 1—5; 14: 1—19; 16: 4—31.

This second part of the book describes individual examples of the oppression of Israel through their neighboring peoples and the deliverance through the divinely appointed judges. Usually these oppressions concerned only one of the 12 tribes, yes, some of them, at least the oppression of the east Jordan territory through the Ammonites, which Jephthah stayed, and the oppression of the west Jordan land through the Philistines which Samson and finally Samuel

stopped, were contemporaneous. The whole period of the judges, therefore, does not cover 450 years, as St. Paul, Acts 13:20, says according to Jewish tradition, which simply takes the dates of the Book of Judges consecutively and adds them together, but only about 320 years, which coincides with 1 Kings 6:1, and also with Judges 11:26. The book enumerates 12 judges all in all, whom God called in times of national need, and who then after the victory over their enemies enjoyed leadership and governmental power and esteem in the particular tribe or tribes until their end. They are the following: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Barak and the prophetess Deborah, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson. We here limit ourselves to the four most important among them.

The **Canaanites** in the north (Phoenicians ?) under Jabim (= king) of Hazor had sorely oppressed the northern tribes for twenty years. **Barak** at the advice and demand of the prophetess **Deborah** and accompanied by her had undertaken an attack upon them and had completely defeated them (4:1-16). Deborah saw a guarantee in this for the destruction of all enemies of the Lord, who might advance in the future (5:31) and composed a strong hymn of triumph, which together with Moses' hymn in Ex. 15, belongs to the oldest paeans and hymns of victory which the Bible has preserved for us (5:1-31). After a general exhortation to praise the Lord for the courageous uprising of the people to battle against their enemies (5:2) Deborah magnifies 1. the great importance of the victory (5:3-11), describing the glorious time of Israel's elevation to become the people of the Lord, v. 3-5, the shameful humiliation in the immediate past, v. 6-8, and the gladsome turn of events with her own advent, v. 9-11, in the most glowing of colors; 2. paints a glowing picture of the battle and victory, in which v. 13-15 the coming of the bravest among the people to the battle, in v. 15-18 the cowardice of those who remained away from the conflict and the fearlessness of the brave warriors, in v. 19-22 the triumphant ending, is pictured. And finally 3. there follows in v. 23-31 the description of the glorious fruits of this battle and victory, after the cursing of the unpatriotic citizens of Meroz (v. 23), the slaying of the enemy's general Sisera by Jael is exalted and the disappointed anticipation of Sisera's mother who looked for rich booty is ridiculed (v. 24-27, and 28-30). The hymn ends with an expression of the hope taken from this victory that all enemies of the Lord will thus be destroyed and Israel will ever become more mighty (v. 31).

The **Midianites** occupying the section east and northeast of the Gulf of Akaba, the same who had once been defeated by Moses (Num. 31), together with the Amalekites and other tribes of the desert oppressed Israel, by coming through the east Jordan country over the Jordan as far as the plains of Jezreel, robbing and murdering, devastating the fields, taking the crops by violence, and driving away the cattle. This they continued to do for seven years, always coming at the season of the harvest. Through a special appearance the angel of the Lord called **Gideon** as a deliverer, brought him back to true worship himself, and then made him zealous to destroy the worship of Baal, so that he broke down the altar erected to Baal (6:1-32), and gave him two signs as a pledge that He would be with him in the conflict (6:33-40). He soon had a large army under his command, but this was quickly reduced from 32,000 to 10,000, and then from 10,000 to 300, so that Israel might see that its deliverance is due to an act of God only (7:1-8). With this handful of people Gideon as a true hero of God, whom nothing makes strong but his faith, enters into the wonderful nocturnal combat and gains the victory over an overwhelming majority (7:9-22). He pursued the enemies as far as the Jordan, where they were expected and again defeated by the Ephraimites, who held the Jordan and lay in ambush for them (7:23-8:3). In order to destroy them once for all Gideon pursued those of them that escaped to the east boundary of Gilead and slew them there (8:4-12). After his return he punished the selfish and unpatriotic cities of Succoth and Peniel and executed the captive kings of the Midianites (8:13-21). After this victory the people offered Gideon the hereditary crown. In true understanding, as expressed in the law of Moses, that only the Lord is king over Israel and that they do not need a visible human king, he declined the honor, and then he fell into sin—for so closely does truth and falsehood come together in this period of the judges—by establishing another place of worship in his home city (8:22-27) where the angel of the Lord had appeared to him, though this was in opposition to the same law according to which there should be but **one** sanctuary in Israel. (He did this either by attempting to ascertain the will of God by wearing a costly newly made highpriestly shoulder piece with breastplate with its jewels and using the Urim and Thummim [see page 184] as though he were a high priest, or by constructing a little sanctuary with an altar and a regular sacrifice.) Thus he led Israel into a service contrary to the law (v. 27 "Israel went whoring after it"), and himself prepared the way, though he did not intend this, for a re-entry

of the idolatry of Baal. For this reason his house was punished, as shown in detail in 8:33-9:57. As true as the Lord was king and needed no human king as a substitute and representative, just so true only the high priest appointed by Him and then only in the sanctuary at Shiloh, should be the highpriestly mediator between God and His people (see pages 173, 180).

Questions:—1. What does the book of Judges relate?—2. Into what three parts is it divided?—3. What does the first part contain?—4. What does the second part contain?—5. How are the times of oppression it speaks of not to be understood?—6. What relation as to time, for instance, exists between the oppression of the land east of the Jordan through the Ammonites and that west of it through the Philistines?—7. How does this fact affect the chronology of the book of Judges?—8. How many judges are enumerated in the book of Judges?—9. What was their two-fold task, whether it be for the whole people or for only part of it?—10. Who had invaded the northern part of the country and for twenty years oppressed the northern tribes?—11. Who took up battle with them and defeated them?—12. Who urged him on?—13. What did Deborah see in the defeat of the northern Canaanites?—14. How did she express it?—15. Where is Deborah's hymn of victory recorded?—16. Into what three parts may we divide it?—17. With what expression of hope does it end?—18. What people invaded the land from the south-east?—19. Describe the manner of their oppression of Israel!—20. Whom did God call as savior in this case?—21. How did He have to prepare Gideon before He could make use of him as savior?—22. What did God make of him after he had first led him back to the true worship of God?—23. How did Gideon demonstrate his zeal for true worship?—24. How did God strengthen Gideon in his conviction that He would be with him?—25. Why was his large army reduced from 32,000 to 300 men?—26. By what did Gideon with his 300 men really win this wonderful night battle with the enemy?—27. Why did Gideon pursue the fleeing enemies to the eastern boundaries of Gilead?—28. What was Gideon offered on his return?—29. Why did he reject the honor?—30. In what way, alas! did he sin soon after this?—31. Why was it a sin to establish a place of worship in his home city?—32. What punishment was meted out to Gideon and his house?—33. Gideon had, indeed, recognized that God alone was King of Israel, and that He would not acknowledge a human representative unless He Himself had appointed him; what should Gideon have known and considered in this case, too?

As a punishment for a new defection God gave the land east of the Jordan into the power of the **Ammonites** (10:6-7). He even permitted them to cross the Jordan and oppress the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim (10:8-9). After a tribulation of 18 years

Israel again appealed to God. He, indeed, at first rejected them and directed them to their strange gods whom they had served so faithfully. But when they humiliated themselves and came to true repentance He again graciously received them (10:10—16). Trusting in His help the people came together and camped at Mizpeh. But they lacked a leader. Then they remembered **Jephthah**, whom his brothers had at one time driven away because he was the son of a concubine of his father, but who on his own accord and as a free lance had already done the Ammonites irreparable damage. Evidently he was not as noble a character as was Gideon and seems to have known but little of the law, for he exacted a promise from the people that they would put him in as the head if he would defeat the Ammonites (10:17—11:11). At first he tried by negotiation to persuade the Ammonites to cease their hostilities (11:12—28). When he failed in this the spirit of God came upon him and he seized his sword (v. 29). Before he went into battle he vowed to God, "Whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering" (v. 13). Then, indeed, he defeated the Ammonites in a great battle, but as a result of his careless vow he also sacrificed his daughter, his only child, because she was the first who came to meet him from his house (11:34—40)! Luther says, "Indeed, men say he did not sacrifice her, but the text is clear." The grief of the father, the heroic self-command of the daughter, the annual commemorative feast of the daughters of Israel and the whole presentation of the narrator, who obviously admires the deed and yet abhors it, and for this reason refrains from saying with so many words what the father did with his daughter (v. 39), prohibits the interpretation that Jephthah sentenced his daughter to life-long celibacy and continued service at the sanctuary, and demands the assumption that Jephthah did, indeed, really sacrifice his daughter. At a time when the firstborn were sacrificed to Moloch, and with a man like Jephthah, who shows but little understanding for theocracy, an act like that is not so strange.—The happy ending of the combat with the Ammonites called forth the envy of the proud tribe of Ephraim, as this had already been the case under Gideon (Judges 8:1—3), so that they forgot all fraternal obligations and all ties of brotherhood with the east Jordan tribes, and since Jephthah had not invited them to take part in the struggle with the Ammonites, declared war against their brothers. But Jephthah completely defeated them, and whoever came to the Jordan in his flight was rec-

ognized as an Ephraimite by his way of pronouncing the countersign and pass word and slain (the Ephraimites said Sibboleth instead of Shibboleth).

At the same time while the Ammonites were oppressing Israel from the east, the **Philistines** came from the west and for 40 years sorely worried them (10:6, 7; 13:1). Then God caused **Samson** to be born, chose him for a Nazarite before his birth (see page 200), and through him made a beginning at least to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines (13:2-5). Chapters 14-16 tell Samson's story in detail. It is filled with earnest warnings, for it shows how lust of the eyes (14:1-3) and lust of the flesh (16:1) and conjugal union with such who are enemies of one's own people and accursed (14:3; 16:4), united with disobedience to one's parents (14:3), can overcome even the strongest operations of the Spirit of God (13:24, 25), until they totally disappear and man enters into his destruction (16:16-21). It also shows us the whole wretchedness of the people of Israel of that day in all its nakedness, for they not only refused to assist Samson in his struggle with the Philistines, but the tribe of Judah in contemptible cowardice even delivered him into their hands (15:9-13). Not until Samson humbled himself before God, however, called upon Him for help, and was willing to sacrifice himself for his people, God also turned to him, so that in his death he did the Philistines more damage than during his life-time (16:22-31).

3. The Appendices, Chapters 17-21.

Both appendices tell instances which occurred soon after Joshua's death during the life-time of the high priest Phinehas (20:28). The first tells how the Ephraimite Micah worshipped Jahveh under a molten image and arranged for his own religious service and priest, instead of being satisfied with Shiloh, but how his image and priest were robbed by Danites, who were migrating from their heritage in the northern part of the country, and taken to their new settlement at Laish-Dan. The incident shows us how soon after Joshua's death the people's trend and propensity to worship Jahve in an idolatrous way (Ex. 20:4) cropped out, and how this service from the very beginning was stained with sin and unrighteousness.—The second incident shows, 1. that the immorality of the Canaanites found a fruitful soil here and there in Israel soon after Joshua's death; 2. but that the people as such were not yet contaminated, but remembering their call to be the holy people of God, did try to root out this contamination in its midst; 3. that the consciousness of their oneness,

and that all tribes are a unity, and that none should die out, was still very strong, that all enmity must be buried and means earnestly sought to hinder such dying out—although well merited.

The whole period of the judges is pervaded by traits of roughness that can not be sanctioned from the point of view of the New Testament. Ehud's deed (3:14—23), Jael's deed (4:17—22), Deborah's exaltation of the latter (5:24—30), and many other instances, do not stand on the lofty level of the spirit of Christ, though we can well understand these things from the point of view of those times, and it is true, that we are here dealing with people who are the enemies of the people of God and earned death. We can not but note here the necessity of progress from a lower to a higher morality; comp. Luke 9:52—56.

* * *

Judges 18:30 shows that the **Book of Judges** was not written until after the taking away of the Danites into the Assyrian captivity (2 Kings 15:29). But this does not curtail its trustworthiness, for it is evidently compiled from ancient notes gathered perhaps by Samuel. Besides the fact that it was incorporated in the Holy Scriptures through divine guidance vouches for its trustworthiness.

Questions:—1. What does the second part of the book of Judges contain?—2. How are the various oppressions, here related, not to be understood?—3. Who, for instance, oppressed the northern tribes?—4. Who was their savior?—5. What people came from the east and south-east to oppress the east Jordanland and part of the west Jordanland?—6. Whom did God raise as a savior for them?—7. Into whose power did God again give the people east of the Jordan after a new defection?—8. What tribes living west of the Jordan were also affected by this oppression?—9. What did the oppressed tribes do after a tribulation lasting 18 years?—10. How did God at first answer their cry?—11. What impression did that make on Israel?—12. How did God now treat them?—13. What did the people then venture?—14. What induced them to select Jephthah as their leader?—15. How did he betray that he was not as noble a character as Gideon and unfamiliar with the law?—16. In what way did he first try to help?—17. What did the spirit of God prompt him to do when peaceful negotiations failed?—18. What did Jephthah carelessly vow before he went into battle?—19. What happened as he returned victoriously?—20. To what cruel act did he now feel himself bound by his foolish vow?—21. What only did Jephthah do with his daughter, according to some commentators?—22. What facts recorded in the narrative force the interpretation that he really sacrificed his daughter?—23. Why does that not seem very strange considering the character of Jephthah

and the times in which he lived?—24. Why should he not have sacrificed his daughter in spite of the vow?—25. What effect did the happy ending of the struggle have on the proud tribe of Ephraim?—26. How could such a thing happen?—27. What did Ephraim, driven by its envy, even do?—28. How was Ephraim punished?—29. Who had invaded the land from the west at the same time while the Ammonites were oppressing the east Jordanland and parts of that west of the Jordan?—30. How long did this oppression last?—31. Who was born at that time, to be the savior—partly at least—from the power of the Philistines?—32. As what did God choose him even before his birth?—33. What chapters tell us the story of Samson?—34. What serious truth is contained in this story for our warning?—35. What, however, can we discern in this story with equal clearness?—36. In what way does Samson's story illustrate the most wretched condition of Israel at that time?—37. At what time finally did God assist Samson so that he could do the Philistines more damage in his death than during his life-time?—38. What does the third part of the book of Judges contain?—39. To what times does it lead us back?—40. What does the first appendix relate?—41. What does this incident show?—42. Of what does the second appendix treat?—43. What three things does it show?—44. Show that traits of roughness pervade the whole book of Judges!—45. What are we to think of it?—46. Unless the as-sage 18:30 is a later explanatory note, when could the book of Judges first have been written?—47. Upon whose notes may the compilation of the book, of Judges be based?—48. What fact vouches for its trustworthiness?—49. Who was working in the compilation and the acceptance of the book into the Holy Scriptures?—50. What word of Paul applies also to the book of Judges?

The Book of Ruth.

The beautiful story of the Moabite Ruth, preserved for us in the book by that name, also transpired during the times of the judges. It speaks of faithfulness and its reward (1: 16, 17). Ruth's faithfulness to her mother-in-law Naomi was the soil on which her understanding of the greatness of Israel's God and the faith in Him grew. And the reception of the heathen woman into membership of the people of Israel, her elevation to the marriage with Boaz and thus to the line of female ancestors of David and of Christ (Matt. 1: 5), is the reward of fidelity. The way to fellowship with God is and remains not natural descent and extraction but faith, and God can work this also in a heathen. By this important

thought the Book of Ruth is connected with the story of Rahab (Josh. 6:25) and the times of the patriarchs (Gen. 12:3), and points forward to the times of the prophets (for inst. Isaiah 60:3) and Christ and the apostles (Joh. 4; Matth. 8:10-13; 28:19; Acts 10:34, 35; Gal. 3:13, 14).

The little book also affords valuable instructions concerning the inner conditions of the times of the judges. It shows how in spite of the oft occurring apostasy and defection and heathen immorality there were still circles in which the faith in Jahve was fostered and tenaciously clung to, and the law of Moses known and observed. For the obligation of Boaz to marry Ruth (2:20; 3:9, 12; 4:1-11), was based on the statute concerning the levirate (levir = a husband's brother, i. e., brother-in-law, hence marriage of brother-in-law) Deut. 25:5-10. While the author of the book finds it necessary to explain this custom to his readers (3:7), at the time of the story the custom was still in vogue.—3:4 and 4:18-22 also show that the Book of Ruth could not have been written prior to the time when David ruled as recognized king in Israel. Then people became interested in retaining this beautiful story from the days of their ancestors and handing it down to posterity. We do not know who attended to this, and it does not matter, for now the book, through the providence of God and His guidance, has become an integral part of the Holy Scriptures.

Questions:—1. What book, too, is regarded as an historical book?—2. Why does the book of Ruth follow that of Judges?—3. What does it speak of?—4. Whose faithfulness is related?—5. In what did it consist?—6. What grew on the soil of Ruth's faithfulness to her mother-in-law?—7. What was the reward of her faithfulness?—8. What cannot be the way to fellowship with God when a heathen woman can be received into this fellowship?—9. What alone leads to it?—10. Why was the fact that faith and not natural descent and extraction leads to fellowship with God, an especially important one for the Jews, taught here?—11. Where had the thought already received expression?—12. Where does Jesus speak of it?—13. Where Paul?—14. How does the book of Ruth also show that in spite of the oft recurring defection and apostasy there were also circles in which the law of God was known and followed even in the times of the Judges?—15. When may the book of Ruth have been written?

The Two Books of Samuel.

The **two Books of Samuel** mark the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Israel. The time of oppression by neighboring peoples is nearing its end, and now follows the period of the great wars, during which Israel conquers its erstwhile oppressors and develops into a great nation. The Lord Himself takes a hand to give to His people a place of honor among the nations of the world. It is not by chance merely that God for the first time is named Jahve Sabaoth, i. e., Lord of hosts, 1 Sam. 1:3; rather is it due to the fact, that now more than at any time since the deliverance from Egypt and the entrance into Canaan He puts Himself with all His power fully on Israel's side. At the same time this is the period where in order to realize His plans God establishes two offices, one of which, indeed, was something not entirely new but is now made a permanent institution, whereas the other was an innovation. These are the offices of the **prophet** and the **king**. The prophet was to be the religious and the king the political leader. Both, however, were representatives of the invisible God, the prophet the mouthpiece, the king the hand of God. So in spite of the introduction of monarchy, Israel was to remain a theocracy (i. e., sovereignty of God), as the Mosaic law had already established; it was not God's will to renounce His kingship over Israel, He rather intended to rule by means of the human kings who were to serve as His visible organs. And since God had also retained for Himself the external government of the people and manifested His will through the mouth of the prophet, it was the duty of the king, in all important transactions of the state, in matters of peace and war, etc., to be guided by the will of God as revealed through His prophet. What a blessed time might have begun and continued for Israel, if the people had only at all times obeyed the voice of its prophets, and its kings had carried out the

will of God as revealed by them! The books of Samuel relate how God called **Samuel** to his office as prophet, how He brought about an inner renewal of the people through him, and how He appointed **Saul** and **David** as the first kings; how Saul was then rejected by the Lord, because he refused to heed the voice of Samuel the prophet, and how David succeeded him as king, and because he governed himself according to the divine will made known to him by the prophets, led his people to great glory and renown. It is not the purpose, therefore, of the Books of Samuel to report in detail, all events which transpired from Samuel's birth to David's death. It merely relates the happenings which show to future generations the true relation which the prophet and the king should occupy to each other according to God's will, if Israel is, indeed, to be a true people of the covenant and experience blessing and happiness. They narrate the history of the past, yet not without gaps and not in its continuity, and always for the purpose of instructing the present. And this also shows us the value which these books have for us of the present day. The **first Book of Samuel** consists of three sections and tells the story of **Samuel as prophet and judge, and of the reign of Saul**; for chapters 1—7 show how the people are again made the people of the covenant through the ministry of Samuel; chapters 8—15, how Saul is anointed king, but in spite of his good beginning, is finally rejected on account of his disobedience; chapters 16—31, how David is anointed by Samuel to succeed Saul, but suffers much persecution at the hand of Saul until the latter finds a horrible end. The **second Book of Samuel**, in four sections, treats of **David's kingdom**; for chapters 1—4 describe the first seven years of his reign when he ruled only over Judah and was forced constantly to battle against the adherents of the family of Saul; chapters 5—9 describe his reign over the entire people with all its glory and power; chapters 10—20 tell the

story of his grievous sin and the temporal sufferings and penalties called forth thereby, and also of his sincere repentance; chapters 21—24 detail the last years of his reign.

The first Book of Samuel: 1. The people are again made the people of the covenant through the ministry of Samuel, chapters 1—7. —Read 1:9—18; 2:1—10; 3:1—21; 4:1—18; 7:1—19.

Israel still suffered under the oppression of the Philistines (Judges 13:1). Eli, the high priest, was a well meaning man but weak. He neither led the people to true repentance nor was he the man to liberate them from the yoke of the Philistines. God, therefore, created special instruments to help His people both internally and externally. We know how He caused Samson to be born that he might begin the work of delivering the people from the Philistines (Judges 13:5). But we also know that Samson was far too sensual and voluptuous to be a true instrument of God, and that Israel was far too divided by strife in its own ranks to be conscious of its own real mission, to be of any assistance to Samson in carrying out his purpose (page 240). God knew this. For this reason He caused Samuel to be born only a few years after the birth of Samson, so that he might in truth lead Israel back to God, and also deliver it from the yoke of the Philistines and renew it to the people of His covenant. 1 Sam. describes how his birth already was a special manifestation of divine grace, for he was given to childless Hannah, the pious wife of Elkanah, in answer to her fervent prayer. What we read about Elkanah, 1:1—8, shows us two things: 1) that even during the decadent period of the Judges there were still families in Israel who strictly observed the Mosaic law, for Elkanah and his wives went up to the tabernacle, which still stood at Shiloh (Jos. 18:1), each year to worship and to sacrifice (1:3), as commanded Ex. 34:23; Deut. 16:16; 2) that even in the house of a pious Levite (as Elkanah seems to have been) the evil custom of bigamy obtained, as we saw it in the homes of the patriarch Jacob (indeed, contrary to his own intention). And as in that instance it here also means much grief, for Peninnah ridiculed Hannah because she was barren of children. Barrenness was looked upon in Israel as a mark of divine disfavor (see Gen. 1:28), and Hannah also regarded it as such. Though Elkanah showed her increased love, for he gave her a double portion at the sacrificial meal, v. 5, and consoled her with kind words also, v. 8, this did not take away her grief. Then she did what has always proven the best remedy with pious and godfearing people,

she laid her grief before God in prayer. He should bless her with a son as a sign that He is not ungracious to her. If He will grant her this prayer she will thank Him in a two-fold way: 1) she will consecrate her son to lifelong service at the sanctuary (thus not only from his 25th year up and then only for certain periods of the year, as demanded of Levites); 2) and he shall be a Nazirite (Nazarite) for his whole life (v. 11; comp. Numbers 6:22, following, and page 200). When Hannah had thus poured out her grief before God, she already felt comforted, and she also accepted the word of Eli, the high priest (v. 17), who strangely enough regarded her as one drunk, as a pledge that the Lord would hear her prayer. She was not mistaken, for she was blessed with a son. And that his name might be a constant reminder of the fact, that she had wrung him from God in prayer, she called him Samuel, "God hath heard." When she had weaned him, according to the custom in Israel when the child was about three years of age, 2 Macc. 7:28, she brought him to the tabernacle and put him into the hands of the high priest Eli for lifelong service of God (1:23-28), thereby fulfilling her promise. But she did not return to her home without first thanking God for His grace in a magnificent hymn of praise (2:1-10). Her own experience, that God is well able to hear prayer and give to the lowly and poor a place of honor, is her pledge that the oppressed condition of her people can not ever endure. God will also deliver them from the hands of arrogant adversaries and bring them to honor. Standing on the promises from the times of the patriarchs, especially Gen. 49:10, she already visualizes and sees the king and Messiah arise, who will lead His people Israel to glory and judge the world (2:10; "horn" is the symbol of power; He will exalt the horn of His anointed, i. e., elevate His power). The Magnificat, the hymn of Mary before the birth of Christ (Luke 1:46-55), many times alludes to this hymn of praise by Hannah.

Questions:—1. Enumerate the historical books of the Old Testament!—2. How far does the narrative of sacred story extend in the five books of Moses?—3. What does the book of Joshua relate?—4. What is the contents of the book of Judges?—5. To what period does the story of Ruth belong?—6. In how many respects do the books of Samuel mark a new chapter in Israel's history?—7. How is this shown in Israel's external relation to its neighbors?—8. What name of God now appears for the first time and gives expression to this condition?—9. What new offices did God institute by means of which he would carry out his will to the best interests of Israel?—10. Which one of these offices had existed before and was now made per-

manent?—11. What was to be the office of the prophets?—12. And what that of the kings?—13. In what relation to the prophets were the kings to stand in all important matters of state?—14. What was the reason for this?—15. Who was therefore to remain the Lord and King of Israel in spite of the institution of the monarchy?—16. And as what were the prophets and kings to be considered?—17. What expression commonly denotes this form of government in Israel?—18. What do the books of Samuel therefore tell us?—19. Accordingly, what should we not expect to find in them?—20. What, rather, is their object?—21. Into what three parts may the first book of Samuel be divided?—22. What does the first, the second, and the third part relate?—23. What does the second book of Samuel treat of?—24. How is it divided?—25. What does the first, the second, the third, and the fourth part describe?—26. What people were still oppressing Israel when Eli was high priest?—27. Characterize Eli!—28. What was God obliged to do in order to free the people from the oppression of the Philistines?—29. Who was to serve Him as an instrument?—30. For what reason could Samson only begin to deliver the people from the oppression of the Philistines?—31. Whom did God, Who knoweth all things, cause to be born soon after Samson's birth that His people might be inwardly renewed and outwardly delivered through him?—32. What chapter tells of Samuel's birth?—33. What two things do we observe when we observe the home-life of Samuel's parents?—34. Show that the bigamy of Elkanah caused much grief!—35. Why could Hannah's barrenness be made the subject of mockery?—36. How did Elkanah try to alleviate the sorrow of his wife Hannah?—37. To whom did Hannah finally open her heart?—38. What two things did she promise if God would only grant her a son?—39. In what respect was the first promise extraordinary as her son, as a Levite, must have served the Lord in His tabernacle?—40. What did Hannah mean when she promised, He shall be a Nazarite?—41. How did Eli regard Hannah while she poured out her heart to God?—42. What did he do, however, when he learned the facts?—43. How did the Lord answer her prayer?—44. Why did Hannah call her son Samuel?—45. At what age were children usually weaned in Israel?—46. Where did Hannah take Samuel when he was weaned?—47. What did she do before she returned home?—48. To what certainty did she give expression in her song of praise?—49. What surety did she possess for her certainty?—50. Whom did Hannah in spirit see arise?—51. What did she expect of the Messiah?—52. To what word of Jacob did she allude in her prophecy?—53. What song of praise in the New Testament is closely related to Hannah's song of praise?

2: 12—17 and 2: 22 afford glimpses into the depths of degeneracy as it obtained at the sacred place of Shiloh brought about by the sons of Eli, the high priest, undermining the respect of the people

for the sacrifice and the priesthood. And this was all the more the case since aged Eli had nothing but weak words of censure in spite of the heinousness of his sons' sins (2:23-25). No wonder that God announced severe judgment to Eli and his house (2:27-36). Its nature should be, that the honor of priesthood and the highpriesthood should remain with the house of Aaron, to which Eli also belonged, but that Eli and his family should bear the punishment for their contempt of God. Indeed, Eli's descendants will be permitted to serve at the altar, but all of them will die young in years, and much to their grief will experience that the tabernacle, the place of their service, will lose its prestige, and God will elect another priest who will do according to His heart. Him will He build a sure house and he shall walk before His anointed (the coming king of Israel) (verse 35). The two sons of Eli, Hophni, and Phinehas, shall die on the same day, and this shall be the sign for Eli that the judgment of God threatened him and his house, will surely come (v. 34). We can see how this threat was literally fulfilled. Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, both fell in battle against the Philistines, and the ark of the covenant, this treasure of Israel and center of the tabernacle, came into the hands of Israel's arch enemies (4:1-17). When the news came of the loss of the ark of the covenant, Eli fell backward from his chair from fright and died (4:18). His daughter-in-law knows of no other name to give to her newly born son than Ichabod, i. e., inglorious, for with the taking of the ark the glory is departed from Israel (4:19-22). Of course, the ark which the Philistines placed in the house of their idol Dagon and consecrated to it, brought them so much trouble (5:1-12), that they recognized the power of the God of Israel and were glad to return it to the land of Israel with gifts (five golden emerods as images of the plagues which afflicted their bodies, and five golden mice, images of those who desolated their fields) (6:1-16). But the ark of God was never again returned to Shiloh. It remained at Kirjath-Jearim (6:17-21) until the time when David brought it to Jerusalem and placed it in a special tabernacle (2 Sam. 6). But with the removal of the ark, the tabernacle at Shiloh had lost its most precious treasure. No wonder, that it no longer remained the religious center of the people, that its sacrifice grew less, and that the priesthood of the descendants of Eli lost its prestige. At a later time the tabernacle was removed from Shiloh to Bethel (1 Sam. 10:3), then to Nob (1 Sam. 21:1-7), still later to Gibeon (1 Kings 3:4; 1 Chron. 17:39, 22:29). When the temple was later built it was even taken down and preserved in the side rooms of the temple (1 Kings

8:4). And also this was fulfilled: In the place of Eli and his descendants God appointed Samuel prophet, leader, and priest of His people (1 Sam. 7:1-15; 7:17; 9:13; 16:2). The high priest from the house of Eli with his offerings was altogether forced into the background. Under Solomon, Abiathar, the descendant of Eli, lost his office as high priest altogether (1 Kings 2:27), and when the temple was built not a member of the house Eli served. The place was taken by Zadok (1 Kings 2:35), who came from a different branch of the house of Aaron (he was a descendant of Phinehas; see page 158). For the present, Samuel stood in the center of his people.

In the tabernacle at Shiloh, arranged as it was with various additional rooms for the priests and the female attendants, **Samuel** spent his youth in all quietness and grew to be a young man. He would not permit himself to become contaminated by the evil example of the sons of Eli, but developed so that God and men took pleasure in him (1 Sam. 2:26; comp. Luke 2:52). Due to Israel's disobedience God could not fulfill His promise (Deut. 18:15, following), that His people should not want for prophets to reveal and proclaim to them the will of God. Thus the Word of God had become precious, i. e., rare, in those days in Israel and prophecy by prophets of God an exception (3:1). But now Samuel was destined to become the prophet, i. e., the speaker and revealer of the divine will, so that a new period might begin in Israel. Chapter 3 in a spirited way tells of the first revelation of God which Samuel, who slept in one of the apartments of the tabernacle received before the lamp of God, i. e., the seven armed candle stick, went out (i. e., before the break of day, when it was extinguished, 3:3). It is evident that this must have been the first, since he could not explain the voice which called him except as the voice of Eli (3:4-10, especially verse 7), until Eli himself instructed him to the contrary. And it is also evident that he was faithful in his service, for he arose three times without murmuring to inquire after Eli's wishes. This is significant. For he who is not faithful in his temporal calling can not be used by God for any special work in His kingdom. And the fact that he frankly tells aged Eli what God had said to him, however painful this message of judgment for the family of his teacher must have been for him (3:16-18), clearly shows that Samuel will be a prophet such as God must have for his people at this time. If Israel was to be saved it must have a prophet who sincerely sorrowed over the decadence of his people and the judgment of God which it invited, but who also at the same time frankly proclaimed God's wrath and judgment. Without the mes-

sage of divine wrath Israel would never have come to repent of its sin, and without repentance and faith there could have been no help.

Samuel was at least a youth when he received this first revelation (the Hebrew word for "child," 3:1, also means youth, young man). But this, though the first, was not the only revelation, which he received. Rather did he more and more become the organ through which God regularly imparted His will to Israel. And especially since what Samuel said of future things did "not fall to the ground" (i. e., did not remain unfulfilled, 3:19), he soon became more and more the religious center for the whole of Israel, so that men counselled with him from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south. As a result of this and in contrast with the dissension and separation during the period of the Judges Israel now not only became conscious of its national and religious unity, but Samuel was also offered by God the best opportunity to operate in a truly reformatory way for the whole people and to renew it at its core. And Samuel employed the opportunity to the best of his ability. The law was again recognized as a power among the people and a standard to regulate their lives. In order to have assistants Samuel established **schools for prophets** (1 Sam. 19:18 where Naioth means houses where the pupils of prophets dwelt), i. e., he assembled men about him whom he taught the law and history of Israel, so that God could use them as preachers and prophets for His people. And this quiet work of Samuel bore its fruits. The oppression exercised by the Philistines from the outside, which still continued, was well adapted to deepen the influence of the word proclaimed by Samuel. Thus "Israel lamented after the Lord," poured out its heart before Him with much weeping and lamentation. A real **time of repentance** supervened in Israel, a time in which it was recognized not only that they had sinned but also that Jahve alone could help. And then, twenty years after the Philistines had returned the ark of the covenant, the time for energetic action had come (7:1—3). Samuel frankly declared, that Israel could only then expect a change in its oppressed condition, if it really meant the repentance it had begun, would destroy idolatry throughout the land and turn to the Lord with its whole heart (7:3). That turned the tide and clinched matters. Israel put away the strange gods and again began to serve the Lord only, as in the days of Joshua (Joshua 24). But that this repentance might be a matter for the whole nation, Samuel assembled representatives from all sections of the people at Mizpeh; no doubt at this particular point near the western border of the territory of Benjamin, so that the battle against the Philistines might be

taken up at once. And a great meeting was held, such as had not been held since the great meeting at Shechem shortly before Joshua's death (Josh. 24). Still there was a great difference between this meeting and the former. There it was only necessary to exhort Israel to remain true to the Lord for all the future, whereas, here it became a great **day of humiliation and repentance**, because Israel had been unfaithful to its promise and during the last 300 years had so many times forsaken its God. And Israel did repent from its whole heart. The symbolical act of the pouring out of the water before the Lord was a public confession that its own strength was gone, and that conscious of its own grievous sin it stood before the Lord as nothing. The fasting symbolized the sincerity of its humiliation before God, and the confession of its lips, "We have sinned against the Lord," was a clear and unmistakable declaration of what it had said symbolically by the pouring out of water and the fasting (7:5—6). Thus Samuel "judged at Mizpeh," i. e., brought Israel back into the true relation with its God. Israel now again stood as the true covenant people of God. It had not progressed during the 300—400 years since Joshua's death. It might well be grateful for the fact that God had not entirely rejected it on account of its manifold disobedience, that He accepted its repentance and again regarded it as the people of His covenant.

When Israel had again come into the true relation to its God, all things changed, internally and externally (7:7—14). **Internally:** for when the Philistines attempted to take the Israelites assembled at Mizpeh by surprise by suddenly coming upon them, the latter, indeed, were frightened, but they did not now, as they had done twenty years before, pin their hope to a bit of superstition, namely that a part of the sanctuary like the ark of the covenant would guarantee them victory (4:3), rather did they ask Samuel, the man of God, for his intercession with the living God, and trusting in the help of Him who had again taken them as His people they went into battle. And Samuel did intercede for them with God with sacrifice and prayer. **Externally:** for in answer to Samuel's sacrifice and prayer God thundered in the clouds as a sign that He heard Samuel's prayer, and through an awful storm discomfited the enemies, so that in a decisive battle they were completely routed. At the same place where twenty years before Israel had suffered the terrible defeat by these selfsame enemies, Samuel could now erect a memorial to the help of God, the stone **Ebenezer**. But this decisive victory fired Israel's courage to undertake further attacks upon the Philistines. They re-conquered all the territory which these enemies had robbed, so that in spite of

various attempts to secure a firm foothold in Israel's land they could not succeed as long as Samuel lived.—Samuel, now more than ever, remained the center of the religious and national life of Israel, prophet, priest, and judge in one person. He lived at Ramah (situated in the tribe of Benjamin, about two hours to the northwest of the city of Jerusalem), the same place where he had been born, 1 Sam. 1:1. The tabernacle had lost the ark of the covenant, and thus the very thing which made it the sanctuary of God; how then could the sacred service, could worship be bound to Shiloh? Besides Shiloh had been destroyed by the Philistines after the battle of Aphek (1 Sam. 4:10, following; comp. Ps. 78:59—68; Jer. 7:12—15, 26). And evidently the opinion prevailed that the ark must not be removed from Kirjath-jearim without a special command from God (7:1). It is a part of the punishment meted out to Eli's family that in regard to priesthood and sacrifice chaotic conditions prevailed, and Samuel was no doubt ordained by God Himself to assume the functions of the priesthood, although he was only the son of a Levite. At any rate God solemnly recognized Samuel's sacrifice by giving them the victory over the Philistines after his sacrifice and prayer, although Samuel did not belong to the priesthood and only priests could offer sacrifice according to the law (7:9—10). And as Samuel offered sacrifice for Israel at Ramah and here also attended to all political matters, he also went from here to Bethel in the north, Mizpeh in the west, and Gilgal in the east each year to sit in court and pronounce judgment. Thus after many years of selfishness and discord, of oppression, disorder, and apostasy Israel enjoyed a period of quiet and healthy development, growing stronger internally and externally under his leadership.

Questions:—1. Into how many parts is the first book of Samuel divided?—2. What does the first, the second, and the third part treat of?—3. What section of the first part shows the depth of degeneracy that obtained in Eli's time at the sacred place of Shiloh?—4. With what action did aged Eli content himself in spite of the heinous sins of his sons?—5. What did God then do?—6. Wherein was the judgment on Eli and his house to consist?—7. How were Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli, to be punished?—8. And of what was their death again to be a sign?—9. Narrate, how this threat was shortly fulfilled!—10. Why did Eli's daughter-in-law call her new-born son Ichabod?—11. Where had the ark of the covenant been taken?—12. Describe the troubles that befell the Philistines because the ark was in their midst!—13. What were the Philistines finally induced to do?—14. Where did the ark now remain?—15. What became of Shiloh after the ark, the most important part of the tabernacle, had been taken away?—16. Describe the later fate

of the ark!—17. When was the other punishment with which God had threatened Eli and his house, fulfilled?—18. Who now occupied a central position in Israel?—19. Where did Samuel grow from childhood to young manhood?—20. What attitude did he take toward his godless surroundings?—21. Into what was he to develop according to God's will?—22. Why did Israel need a prophet, who proclaimed God's will, just at the present time?—23. When already had God promised to send them a prophet?—24. What may have been the reason why this promise had not been previously fulfilled?—25. What chapter relates God's first revelation to the lad Samuel?—26. Describe it!—27. What proves that this was God's first revelation to Samuel?—28. By what three things do we learn that Samuel was developing into a man whom God could make use of?—29. What kind of man did Israel now especially need if it was to be turned from its wicked ways?—30. For what purpose did God continue to use him?—31. How did it come about that Samuel more and more became the religious center for the whole of Israel?—32. What two things resulted from the fact that all the tribes came to consult with him?—33. How did Samuel employ this opportunity?—34. What did Samuel establish in order to get assistants in his work among the people?—35. What else assisted the work of Samuel upon the hearts of the people?—36. What success followed his work?—37. What did he finally and frankly tell the people?—38. What was Israel's answer?—39. What did Samuel do in order that all Israel might repent?—40. With what other great meeting may the meeting at Mizpeh be compared?—41. What, however, was the great difference between them?—42. What did the act of pouring out the water signify?—43. And what the act of fasting?—44. What had thus become of the old covenant on the part of the people?—45. In what two ways did a great change again become apparent when Israel again came into the true relation to its God?—46. How was everything changed internally?—47. And how externally?—48. Where did Samuel erect the memorial to the help of God?—49. Why did he call it Ebenezer?—50. Of what was this victory over the Philistines only the beginning?—51. What offices were united in Samuel during the following years?—52. Where did he live?—53. Where was Ramah?—54. What may have moved him to perform the office of a priest as well though he was only the son of a Levite?—55. At what other places did Samuel attend to all those other matters to which the elders of the towns and cities were not able to attend?—56. What sort of period had Samuel thus ushered in after many years of inner discord and outer oppression?

2. Saul is anointed king by Samuel, but is later rejected of God because of his disobedience. Chapters 8—15.—Read 1 Sam. 8:1—9; 9:1—10, 17—27; 11:1—15; 15:1—31.

After the victory over the Philistines (chapter 7) Israel for about twenty more years enjoyed the leadership of Samuel, so that the work of reformation and renewal begun by him could be stabilized and deepened. But as he grew older he, too, experienced much grief from his sons and the people. At first from his sons. Since he could no longer personally discharge the functions of his office as judge for all sections of the land of Israel he appointed his sons as his substitutes in Beersheba, in the extreme southern portion of the country. But they were more like the wicked sons of Eli than like their conscientious father. They were corruptible and accepted bribes, and passed judgment in favor of those who paid most. This fomented discontent among the people. And this discontent grew all the more because they were again attacked from the outside. The Philistines (10:5) and the Ammonites (12:12) again lifted up their heads. Perhaps they thought that they could again attempt this, since Samuel had grown old. Thus to the grief which his sons caused him there was added the grief caused by the people. Under these conditions the elders of the people came to him and demanded of him to appoint a king (8:1—5). Of course, the law had already expressly designated the time (Deut. 17:14—20) when the people would demand a king. For this event four requirements had been laid down to be observed at the selection of a king: divine election, Israelitic extraction, simple and not the pompous, oriental mode of living, and a simple and pious mind conscious of its connection with the people and the need of governing the people in constant dependence upon God and His law. Thus without doubt, it was God's purpose to give to the people a king in due season. The promises given to Abraham already indicate this fact (Gen. 17:6, 16; 35:11; comp. 36:31; 49:10). The royal requirements, Deut. 17:14—20, were not unknown to the elders. Indeed, they put their demands into a form literally taken from Deut. 17:14. Nor did they insist on appointing the king themselves. They were satisfied again in conformity with Moses' mandate (17:15) to commit the selection entirely to God. For this reason they brought their demand to Samuel, the representative of God on earth (comp. 1 Sam. 10:24). And yet three things were wrong in their demand: 1) They should have waited until God Himself of His own volition had appointed the king. By demanding him themselves they acted as though God were not properly caring for them; 2) they demanded a king "like all the nations," and thought that having such they would lack for nothing and would be great and honored, and become lords over their adversaries, as though the victory over their external enemies and the good order at home

depended less on their invisible king, the Lord God, and more on the strength and prowess, the courage and sagacity of their human leader. But that was an entirely erroneous point of view, to depend more upon men than upon God. Bearing these two facts in mind we understand 1 Sam. 8:7; 3) the demand of the elders involved a grave insult for aged Samuel. He certainly had not deserved to be coldly set aside by his people. But Samuel had a true friend with whom he communed from the days of youth: he laid his matter before God in prayer and obtained the assurance, that it is God's will to acquiesce in the desire of the people (8:6-9). God knew, better than Samuel, Israel's ungrateful disposition, which they had manifested through the centuries from the deliverance from Egypt on. And this new evidence of the same was no surprise for Him. He also knew the ultimate reason for the demand and therefore judged this action not as a rejection of His prophet and representative but as a rejection of Himself, and that He should no longer be their king (v. 7). In view of the patience of God who notwithstanding this did not reject Israel, it no doubt became easier for Samuel also to conquer the personal affront offered him. Yet Israel did not remain unwarned. Commissioned by God (v. 9) Samuel held up before the eyes of the people in unmistakable terms (8:10-18) the rights of the kings round about them, how they must expect that the king, whom they demand, under certain conditions will take their sons and daughters, men- and maidservants, and their cattle (no doubt the term used in verse 16 is to be rendered in this way rather than as "goodliest young men") and asses, acres and vineyards with their products for his own use. But the people are blinded (v. 19-20). They insist on their demand, and only still more forcibly express their rejection of their theocratic position and the disposition that comes therefrom (v. 20), than their elders had done before. At all costs they demand a kingdom to flatter their vanity and hunger after greatness. They will not hear, so they must feel. They shall have (v. 21-22) a king. Later developments show that they were disappointed in their expectations. The first king after a good beginning found a horrible end and left his realm in a disorderly and chaotic condition. Israel was doomed to experience in its own life the truth of Prov. 13:13.

Chapter 9:1-10:1 shows us how God brought Saul and Samuel together, so that Saul is anointed king. Three significant facts here stand out in bold relief: 1) **the noble character of Samuel**. However painful the demand of the people was for him, yet unselfishly and obediently he discharges the duty of anointing the one chosen by God

to be king, after he has clearly recognized the will of God. Yes, and he honored him in public by placing him at the head of the table at the distinguished assembly gathered at the sacrificial meal (v. 22—24), thus according to him the seat of honor and placing before him the best and largest piece of meat of the sacrifice set aside especially for him. And even more than that, he spent the entire evening on the roof of his house with him (in undisturbed confidential talk) who was now to take his place. Their conversation, no doubt, centered about Israel's trouble and the means of help. Since Saul was to be his successor, he, the faithful prophet, would neglect nothing, which might aid and strengthen him in discharging the duties of his office. That is prophetism and patriotism and love for one's people of the true kind, which does not angrily withdraw to sulk and permits things to go as they will even where it has unjustly been dealt with, but rather endures and bends every effort to secure the future of the people. 2) **Saul, too, shows us the best side of his character.** Indeed, he comes from the lowliest family of Benjamin, the smallest tribe in Israel (v. 21). His ancestors throughout are unknown people. Here, too, the principle expressed 1 Cor. 1:28, which we meet again and again in sacred history, is regnant. Yet he possesses great external and internal prerogatives. He was of royal stature (9:2), in the full power of his manhood, for he already had an adult son (Jonathan), who immediately gained renown in the struggles with the Philistines (13:3). And he was also a man of nobility of character. It was not above his dignity to seek the lost asses as his father had requested. He had long since outgrown the shoes of childhood and still modestly and obediently observed the fourth commandment. And it was while following the unpretentious course of his calling, the faithful fulfillment of duty; that he met with Samuel and found the throne of Israel. His heart was not yet set upon high things, for he was much surprised, when he learned of the lofty plans of God for him (v. 20—21). Of course, on the other hand his thoughts seem never to have risen above the horizon of every day life, for he did not know Samuel, although throughout all these long years the latter had been priest, judge, and prophet in the land (9:6—10; 18—19). He must, therefore, become a new man before God can use him in His service. But the Lord chose him, even before this change had taken place, so that here, too, the election might come from grace and not from works (comp. 9:11, 16). 3) The ninth chapter shows us with especial clarity the **wonderful providence of God**, which so rules even the smallest and apparently accidental things, that His "good and gracious will" is

realized in the life of the individual as well as in the life of the nation. Saul should be anointed king by Samuel wholly on the quiet without much ado, so that he might know beforehand that God has chosen him to be the prince over His people. For this reason he comes to Samuel as by chance. And in order that this might come to pass the asses of his father must go astray, still go no other way than that prescribed by God. For this reason the father must send out Saul and he must select as his companion this particular servant who knows Samuel (v. 6). For this reason they must seek without finding and thus unconsciously draw near to where Samuel lives. For this reason the servant must have the fourth part of a shekel of silver, about 17 cents, in his girdle (v. 7, 8). And for this reason finally they must reach Ramah at an hour when Samuel is still present, yet has not the time to attend to their matter at once, but can take them with him to the sacrificial meal and here honor Saul before all the assembly. How wonderful it is! And as Samuel, due to a special revelation or an inner voice, was prepared for the coming of Saul and already knew about his future (v. 15—17), thus also Saul by means of this wonderful coincidence of all happenings and circumstances should be trained for the faith, that it is really God Himself who is giving to him the most desirable thing in Israel, the royal throne.

The **anointing** of Saul with oil (10:1) did not impart spiritual gifts to Saul, but it was a symbol and a pledge of the fact that God would give His Spirit to Saul, which later actually occurred (10:9, 10). Oil in the Orient was used to quicken and strengthen. Men employed it to anoint their bodies when they returned from a fatiguing journey. Thus it could well be the image of the Spirit whose entrance refreshes and renews the soul of man and strengthens it to do great things. Until now nothing had been anointed in Israel, and thus separated from the ordinary and consecrated to the special service of God, except priests and the sanctuary (Ex. 30:23, following; Lev. 8:10, following). If Saul was here anointed to be king, the **kingdom** in addition to the priesthood was established as a **divine order** by means of which the Lord would bless His people. Through the priesthood as well as through the promised prophecy (Deut. 18:15), now established by Samuel, God would bless His people morally and spiritually, and through the kingdom He would bless it in the sphere of the body and the order of the state. God now also purposed to bless His people through Saul and his reign, even though the demand for a kingdom had been born out of false motives. Instead of holding this up to them, God in His mercy was ready to make the desired kingdom

a means of blessing, especially since His own thoughts had also centered on the establishment of a kingdom. Thus was God gracious and merciful towards His people. It should not depend on Him, but solely and alone upon the people and its "anointed," i. e., its king, in how far God would realize for it His thoughts of blessing and salvation.

Questions:—1. Into how many parts may the first book of Samuel be divided?—2. Of what does the first part treat?—3. How far does the second part extend?—4. Of what does it treat?—5. How long did Samuel's activity as a reformer last?—6. Through whom was great sorrow brought to his old age?—7. How through his sons?—8. To what did the conduct of his sons lead?—9. What promoted the dissatisfaction among the people?—10. What may have moved the neighboring nations to rise against Israel just at this time?—11. What was it on the part of the people that brought even greater grief to the heart of Samuel?—12. In order to understand the desire of the people for a king rightly what dare not be overlooked?—13. What conclusion may we draw from the fact that the Mosaic law had already made provision for the time when Israel would have a king?—14. What proved that the elders of the people were familiar with these provisions?—15. Even what mistake did the elders not make?—16. What three things, however, were wrong in their demand?—17. To whom did Samuel in his grief turn with the people's demand?—18. What attitude did God take?—19. What may have induced Him to take this attitude?—20. Who then, took the matter easier when he noticed that God in this case, too, exhibited His wonderful patience?—21. How did God finally warn them not to insist on their demand in a thoughtless way?—22. And when they did not heed God's warning, what did they experience?—23. What does the ninth chapter relate?—24. What three facts in this chapter make a favorable impression on us?—25. What three facts demonstrate the noble character of Samuel?—26. Describe the noble traits in Saul's character as they appear in this chapter!—27. By what do we learn, however, that he needed to be regenerated and renewed before God could use him in His service?—28. What is the third fact in this chapter that impresses us very favorably?—29. Describe the wonderful providence in detail!—30. For what was Saul, by means of this providence, to be trained?—31. What was the significance of the anointing that Samuel performed on Saul?—32. In what respect is the anointing with oil a symbol of the communication of the Holy Spirit?—33. Who and what had been anointed with oil before this time and thus separated for particular service?—34. What office had thus been created in Israel beside the priesthood?—35. What office had God previously established through Samuel?—36. The three offices were to be the means and ways whereby God would bless His people; how were they to be distinguished?—37. How does even the placing of Saul as king over Israel prove that God is gracious and merciful?

In order that Saul may be absolutely certain that God had chosen him king, Samuel foretells three experiences (10:2-7) which will befall him as he returns to his home. These shall be of a nature that they may serve him as the symbols of the new period of his life now about to begin. Two men whom he will meet will tell him that the asses have been found: henceforth he will be relieved of the ordinary cares of life. He will be in the position to dedicate himself entirely to the great duties which his new office will entail. Three men on their way to Bethel, to the place of sacrifice, will greet him and present him with a part of their offerings: henceforth he will be entitled to marks of esteem and to presents. A group of music making and prophesying scholars of prophets will so enthuse him that he with them will praise God in ecstasy: henceforth he will become a new man, endowed with far vision and royal thoughts. For this reason (v. 7) he shall in future of his own accord and without reserve do what he is moved to do. Only one limitation is made verse 8: when he receives a commission from God through the mouth of the prophet he shall obey it unconditionally; and especially so if it involves an undertaking against the Philistines, who had again invaded the land and had penetrated to Saul's home city Gibeah (10:5), and for the battle against whom he had especially been called (9:16). There, when he mobilizes his army at Gilgal against them, he should await the arrival and instruction of the prophet even though it involve a waiting of seven days. And these signs happened as foretold, although only the realization of the third one is described in detail (10:9-13), because in this instance the great change, which took place in Saul, transpired and was also noticed by his fellow men (v. 11), and because it gave rise to a proverbial saying (v. 12), which again occurs 1 Sam. 19:24 and has endured to the present day. When according to verse 12 some one of the people in reply to the question of astonishment, Is Saul also among the prophets? answered with another question, But who is their father? (the father of the scholars of prophets namely), he meant to say, Did the scholars of prophets inherit the gift of prophecy with their birth? If that were the case, then, indeed, the astonishment is justified that Saul, too, should possess this gift. But since they later received this gift from the grace of God, why should it not also now be given to Saul? This gift of prophecy which was here given Saul, i. e., the gift of God-inspired ecstatic praise of God, was only to be a sign that the Spirit had taken possession of his heart, to renew him and to give to all thought and reason a new direction aiming only at the fulfillment of the divine command (comp. 10:6, 9).—Saul re-

turned to his home from his remarkable journey (10:13). He sought asses and found a kingdom and became another man. This latter fact becomes evident at once in the modesty and humility as shown 10:14—16. To his curious uncle, perhaps Abner, who noticed the change in Saul and who had heard of his visit with Samuel, he gives the necessary information, yet does not mention the anointing. Saul is reluctant to proclaim his own glory. He can wait until such a time when God Himself will draw him out of his seclusion.

Chapter 10:27 tells us that God did not fail to do this. He causes Samuel to assemble the people at Mizpeh so that Saul may here be publicly acclaimed king. Samuel causes Saul to be elected king by lot. It should be evident at once that he is not appointed by Samuel, nor yet by the people, but that God Himself has chosen him as His anointed one, for God only can determine how the lot should fall. Saul who knew how the lot would fall had modestly hid himself among the stuff. Now when they found him and he was presented to the people as the chosen one of Jahve they rejoiced over his bodily perfections and his nobility of character and shouted, God save the king. Only a few ill disposed people passed derogatory remarks about the new king which he, however, nobly refused to hear. —When some Christians today resort to the **casting of the lot** to discern the will of God in doubtful cases they can scarcely appeal to this or similar passages. We stand here on the basis of the Old Testament and even here the lot was never used in private matters (not even 1 Chron. 24:5—25:8), but only in such matters which concerned the public weal, and again here only when it became necessary to justify a decision taken before all the people as unquestionably coming from and willed by God (1 Sam. 10:20; 14:38—42), or when it had been expressly commanded by God (Lev. 16:8; Josh. 7:13—19; 13—22; comp. Num. 26:55. Jonah 1:7 **heathen** sailors cast the lot). The only instance where the lot is used in the New Testament (Acts 1:24—26) occurs before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and here also it is a matter where the obvious and unmistakable ratification of God was necessary. Besides, discrimination was here used, at least in so far, that principles were laid down as to who only could be considered, in supplementing and completing the number of apostles, and who not (Acts 1:21—22), so that it simmered down to a mere choice between Joseph and Matthias. We children of the New Testament have the promise of the Lord **Matth. 28:20** and the endowment with the Holy Spirit who leads us into all truth. If we will only in whole-souled obedience to the Word of God put ourselves under

His guidance, use our own Christian understanding, observe conditions and circumstances, as shaped by God, with clear, sober, and consecrated minds, and call upon God for illumination, then we, too, even without the use of the lot will find God's will and way in all difficult and complicated cases.

The following chapters (11 and 12) are radiant with purest sunshine. Although he is now publicly proclaimed king, Saul for the present returns to Gibeah, to his wonted vocation, in part as a matter of cool deliberation, for since some were not yet ready to accept him as king an immediate assumption of royal prerogatives might have led to war and bloodshed, in part and, even more, however, as a matter of sincere trust in God. He felt that he could wait until God Himself saw fit to call him to royal deeds, v. 5. The arrogance of the Ammonites, at one time humiliated by Jephthah (Judges 11), over against **Jabesh-Gilead** in the land east of the Jordan affords God the opportunity to manifest Saul as the true helper before all the people (11:1—11). The Jabeshites according to verse 1 were not the people to sacrifice life and possessions for their membership with the people of God. They were ready to subject themselves to the heathen Ammonites if only these had not made such atrocious demands (v. 2), the fulfillment of which would have incapacitated all male inhabitants of Jabesh for future service in war (for the archer aims with his right eye), and dishonored them for all time to come. Because of this demand they did what they should have done at once: they sought the assistance of their fellow people. And the respite granted them by Nahash in his blind assurance of victory made this possible (v. 3). The messengers sent by the Jabeshites into all sections of Israel came also to Gibeah and through Saul found what they sought. Not only did he sympathize with his jeopardized fellow-people as did the rest of the people, but moved by the Spirit of God he at once set out for powerful deeds. Under threats of punishment as to their temporal possessions (v. 7) he called all physically able men of Israel to arms and in noble courage and trust annihilated the entire hostile force (7—11). But he not only conquers the external enemy, he also conquers self (v. 12, 13), for in noble mastery over self he refuses to take revenge upon them who before were unwilling to accept him as king. He will not desecrate the God given day of blessing by acts of human vengeance. The grace of God which he experienced moves him to offer mercy for right. Thus the day of victory ended with a great feast where Saul was publicly and solemnly acclaimed as king by all the people (v. 14, 15). It paid in every way that Saul refused to act pre-

maturely in anything but left everything to God. And now since the king, whom God had appointed as his successor in leading Israel, had been accepted by all the people, Samuel could justly retire from office (chapter 12). But he does not do it until the people have ratified his unselfish fulfillment of the duties of his office before God and His anointed (12:1—5). This testimony of the people as well as the whole unfolding of the history of Israel with its ever repeated evidences of divine grace and help (12:6—13) clearly shows how unnecessary, unjust, and sinful their childish demands for a king were. Samuel held this up to the people. And what the mouth of the prophet spoke, God confirmed at Samuel's prayer by the voice of thunder (14—18) so rare in the time of the wheat harvest (17). Samuel then consoled the frightened and penitent people, emphatically warned them of the sin of idolatry and promised them his continued intercession and prophetic counsel for the future (19—24). How blessed Israel's further development could now be: at peace with God it also had His representative in the person of its king and prophet always at hand, to be led by them internally and externally. If now its course leads to destruction, it is only its own fault.

Questions:—1. How far does the first part of the first book of Samuel extend?—2. What does it relate?—3. How far does the second part extend?—4. What does it contain?—5. Tell how God led Saul to Samuel, and how Samuel finally anointed him king over Israel?—6. What did Samuel do to convince Saul that God had selected him to be king over Israel?—7. What were the three experiences Saul was to make?—8. What was the first experience also to make clear to him?—9. What the second?—10. And what the third?—11. What single exception was provided regarding the freedom of action?—12. Against whom especially was he to take no action whatever, unless God, through His prophet, had commanded it?—13. Since all three experiences, foretold by Samuel, actually came to pass, why is only the third one related in detail?—14. How are we to understand the first part of verse twelve?—15. Of what did the gift of prophecy here spoken of, consist?—16. Was it to be merely a sign?—17. On his arrival at home, what made it at once apparent that he had been renewed by the Spirit of God?—18. Where was Saul later publicly elected to be king?—19. Why did Samuel have the election take place by lot?—20. In what two-fold way did Saul prove the nobility of his character here in Mizpeh?—21. Why cannot people appeal to our story when in our day they resort to the casting of lots?—22. And why neither to Acts 1:24—26?—23. Why do not we children of the New Testament need the lot?—24. How did Saul show the nobility of his character again after his election?—25. On what occasion did God purpose to present him to all the people as His helper?—26. How did the

people of Jabesh betray that they did not know how to appreciate their membership in the kingdom of God?—27. When only did they choose to remember that they belonged to the elect people?—28. By what circumstance did they still have the necessary time?—29. What is the difference in action between Saul and the others who had heard of the plight?—30. What help did Saul secure?—31. In what did Saul's greatest victory consist?—32. How did Samuel, therefore, permit the day to be observed?—33. What could Samuel now do after God Himself had ratified Saul's kingship before all the people?—34. What testimony did he require of the people before he retired?—35. What did he once more show them quite vividly by reminding them of the constant help of God in need?—36. How did God confirm Samuel's words?—37. With what warning did he conclude his speech?—38. And what promise did he make?—39. Who alone was, therefore, to blame if its further course was not a happy and a blessed one?

If chapters 11 and 12 are flooded with sunshine, as it were, chapters 13—15 are wrapped in gloom, for they tell us how Saul's good beginning did not continue in the same way, how he rather was rejected by God after reigning only a short time because of his lack of faith and unconditional obedience.* And whereas in the east the Ammonites had dared to penetrate as far as Jabesh-Gilead and proposed such scandalous terms (11:2), the **Philistines** had invaded the country from the west and pushed their hordes as far as Gibeah, the home of Saul, so that after the Ammonites were defeated it was necessary to mobilize against the Philistines. Saul was to prove himself the king by conquering these two hereditary enemies of Israel

* Orthographical mistakes have crept into 13:1 and 13:5 of the copies on which our present Hebrew version rests. 13:1 without doubt originally contained a statement concerning the age and the years of the reign of Saul. The present version, however, states that, "Saul was . . . years of age when he became king, and reigned two years over Israel." The first number thus was entirely lost and the second is mutilated. Since numbers were not written with words, single letters being used instead (a = 1; b = 2; g = 3; j = 10; k = 20; l = 30), it was a very easy matter for the copyists to make mistakes when they transcribed numbers. The original text has long since been lost, and the copies which we have, date only to the 10th century after Christ (cf. page 3). Verse 1 may have read: "Saul was 40 years of age when he was made king and reigned 22 years over Israel." Then the Hebrew letter which means 20 would have been dropped. Verse 5 also evidently includes an error of the copyist. It is not likely that there were 30,000 chariots, for 30,000 chariots and only 6000 horsemen are altogether out of proportion. No doubt there were 1000 chariots. For since the Hebrew character for 30 is l and the preceding word (Israel) ends with l, it is likely that the copyist through oversight wrote two l, and the second was later taken to mean the numeral 30.

(9:16), as Samuel had already instructed him at the occasion of his anointing (10:7, 8). Of course, a regular punitive expedition against this warlike people was out of the question for the present even though they had taken the Ammonites by surprise, for Israel did not yet possess a well trained and properly equipped army. For this reason Saul retained at least 3000 men (13:2) of the army which had marched against the Ammonites, so that they might form the nucleus of a later army, and that they might for the first stop the further advance of the Philistines. 2000 of these he kept for himself and 1000 he put under the command of his son Jonathan (13:2). Jonathan, however, was not content merely to stop further advance of the Philistines, but undertook an attack upon advance troops of the Philistines and routed them (13:3). Saul heralded this heroic deed of his son Jonathan throughout the land, as much as to say: Take courage, even the Philistines can not stay forever in the land! But it was evident also that the Philistines were incensed by this (v. 4), and immediately prepared to repair the loss and to show Israel from the very beginning that they were not at all ready to relinquish their mastery over them even though they now had a king in Saul. Saul was fully conscious of this, and for this reason did not wait until the 3000 men were properly trained, but immediately called upon all men able to carry arms to assemble at Gilgal.

Gilgal is situated in the Jordan valley. Saul mobilized his men at such a great distance from the land of the Philistines so that he might train them more fully before the real conflict with the Philistines came.

He well realized that it meant a conflict which would not only determine the freedom of his people, but also the security of his throne. If the Philistines conquered in the war, his kingdom would be ended forever. And, indeed, the Philistines came with an army so great and so well equipped, that the Israelites hid from them wherever they could, and even the men at Gilgal under the immediate leadership of Saul were filled with fear (13:5-7).

Now Saul should show whether he trusted in God with his whole heart, or whether he trusted in himself and in his army. For even before he had undertaken this expedition against the Philistines, Samuel had instructed him to mobilize his army at Gilgal, to tarry seven days, and to attempt nothing until he (Samuel) should have come to offer sacrifice, to invoke God's blessing, and to direct the campaign (10:8). Saul was willing to obey these instructions. Six long days he waited for Samuel's coming, but, when on the seventh

day the prophet did not appear and the Philistines pushed forward, when his own soldiers began to desert him, he, fearing that his whole army might scatter and that some harm might have befallen the prophet, commanded the priests to bring forth the burnt offering (13:9). But this was the test-hour in the life of Saul. God would now try his obedience and trust. It would become clear whether he would obey God's commands to the letter, and whether he would submit himself to God's guidance even though it might appear foolish. **Saul did not stand the test.** He was found wanting.

Hardly had the sacrifice been offered, when Samuel appeared. Saul went out to meet him. He greeted him courteously. But Samuel asked him sternly: "What hast thou done?" Instead of candidly confessing his wrong, Saul began to make excuses (13:11—12). He blamed the exigencies of the hour. He blamed the prophet for not coming as he had appointed. Samuel had, however, come before the end of the seventh day. In seeking to excuse himself, Saul only aggravated his guilt and disclosed his lack of faith. But thus sin always shows itself. Satan knows well how to deceive and beguile. He knows how to make a wicked deed appear harmless and right so that we seek to excuse and even to justify our bad conduct, thereby aggravating our sin and inviting God's wrath and punishment. Samuel can not do otherwise than proclaim God's displeasure and punishment (13:13—14). Though the punishment was severe, Saul himself was not as yet rejected. This took place later (15:10—26). He should still be king of Israel, but the kingdom should not continue in his family. God had even then decided upon the man who should be his successor. If Saul would have waited until the coming of Samuel, if he would have proved his trust and obedience, God would have established his kingdom as He did later in the case of David and his successors. Through his sin, therefore, Saul robbed himself of inestimable blessings.

Should any one deem God's punishment too severe, let him remember, 1) that it was not Samuel's, but God's command which Saul violated (10:8; 13:13—14), and that God had every right to expect obedience to His commands; 2) that this was, so far as we know, the only command which God had given Saul as he ascended the throne; 3) that it was Saul's special mission as king to conquer Israel's greatest enemies, according to the ways and means outlined by God through His prophet. Samuel had explicitly promised that he would come to give aid and counsel. In disdaining to wait, Saul made it clear that he had either never understood or had already forgotten

the peculiar mission for which he had been anointed king of Israel. As king of Israel, he was God's representative. God alone was King. Acting as God's representative, it was his duty to execute God's judgments as commanded by God Himself or by His prophets. Any one who like Saul failed to comprehend the peculiar mission of Israel's kings, who failed to recognize his sin and to crave forgiveness, was unworthy of Israel's throne, both as regards himself and his family. For how grievous if this misunderstanding should be transmitted from father to son! Now, if ever, while Israel's first king was entering upon his life's work, was God constrained to make unmistakably clear, through His punishment, the relation between Himself and Israel's king.

13:15—23 shows that Saul did not accomplish what he had desired in spite of his sin. Notwithstanding his untimely sacrifice before all the people assembled at Gilgal, only about 600 men remained with him. The undaunted Philistines came out of their camps in three companies, destroying everything within reach. The Israelites found it well nigh impossible to stem the tide of the onrushing enemies, for in their first onslaught the Philistines had robbed them of all weapons (13:5) and had driven all smiths from the land who might have wrought new ones or sharpened the old ones. Even when they desired to sharpen their farm tools, they had to go down to the Philistines. Jonathan, it is true, won a notable victory by the help of God over the Philistines (14:15), who ran panic-stricken from the field, but Saul did little to win the day. Jonathan could win because he had the faith and trust which his father lacked. He knew that "God could save by many or by few" (14:6; 14:1—23). How humiliating this deed of Jonathan's heroic faith must have been for Saul! He must have said to himself: "What great deeds I might have done, if I had only tarried at Gilgal, trusting in the power and help of God, until Samuel should have instructed me when to begin the conflict. I might then have crushed the Philistines, but now it is too late." Saul, indeed, desired to follow up this victory and pursue the enemy, but even here he was prompted more by blind passion than by due, God-willed consideration (14:24—26). He would not suffer that food be taken until evening. First the Philistines should be crushed. But his act was foolish, for the men grew faint and could not pursue the enemy with might, so that a part escaped (14:46). When evening drew nigh, the people fell upon the spoil, slaughtered sheep, oxen, and calves, and devoured them without first having drawn the blood as com-

manded in the Law (Leviticus 3:17). And had not the people rescued Jonathan, Saul would have had him killed because of his foolish oath; for Jonathan, knowing nothing of Saul's commandment to abstain from food, had tasted a little honey.

Thus sin waxes strong, when men will not repent. Saul's restless heart and conscience goaded him on to arrogant deeds of passion. If he had only repented, all would have been well. But false zeal can never supplant repentance. At times, Saul sought to return to God (14:33-34; 14:35; 14:37; 14:39, 44), but his endeavors were never crowned with complete success. The sinner who will not repent and pray for forgiveness locks the door unto his own salvation. This was the case with Saul.

Questions:—1. Into how many parts may the First Book of Samuel be divided?—2. Which chapters comprise the first, the second, the third part?—3. What is the contents of the first, the second, and the third part?—4. Mention the incidents which go to show that Saul was at first a God-fearing man.—5. Which chapters show that Saul soon turned wicked?—6. Mention the two main incidents which brought about this change in Saul's conduct!—7. What prompted Saul to mobilize the people for battle at Gilgal?—8. In what way did God test Saul at Gilgal?—9. Why was it difficult for Saul to stand the test?—10. Show that he should and might have stood the test!—11. Why did Saul fail?—12. In how far does he again show at Gilgal that he has changed from good to bad?—13. How does he seek to excuse himself?—14. In how far do you note the deception of sin in his excuses?—15. Describe the punishment which God proclaims to Saul through Samuel.—16. Show how Saul's disobedience and lack of faith gained nothing for him.—17. Show that God's punishment was not too severe.—18. Why could Jonathan win a victory?—19. What should Saul have learned from this victory?—20. In what way did Saul's false zeal show itself?—21. How can you account for Saul's false zeal?—22. What should have supplanted his zeal?—23. What attempts did Saul make to return to God?—24. How only can we return to God, if we have sinned?

Considering the former conduct of Saul, we are not surprised that chapter 15 tells of his **second deliberate transgression**, especially at a time, when it would have been easy for him to obey God's commandment. God instructed him through Samuel to smite and utterly destroy the Amalekites with all that they had. God's commandment was unmistakably clear (15:2-3). The Amalekites should be wiped out because they had sought to oppose and destroy Israel, God's elect people, when Israel was on its way from Egypt to Mount Sinai. The Amalekites had often opposed Israel (Judges 3:13; 6:3,

7, 8). Their most grievous sin, however, had been their attempt treacherously to slay Israel (15:2). God does not forget the sins committed against His people. Four hundred years may elapse, as in this case, before He enters into judgment, but His judgment will come. Saul thoroughly understood God's commandment; he did not take exception to its severity and seeming cruelty. He mobilized his men, moved against the Amalekites, and conquered them. He destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. Neither did he spare the cattle which were "vile and refuse." But King Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle he and his people spared. Without doubt he desired to triumph over his fallen enemy as was the custom of the day. Thus vainglory filled his heart. He and his people spared the best sheep and cattle, because they deemed them too precious to be destroyed. Thus selfishness and greed prompted their conduct. But whatever the motives, neither he nor the people had any right to set aside God's commandment. He should have remembered that the booty belonged to God, and that any one who claimed any part thereof for himself robbed God of His property and would surely be punished, as was Achan before Jericho (Joshua 7). If Saul had repented of his wrong at Gilgal, he would not now have acted in defiance to God's positive command. True, upright repentance would have made him victor over himself and his passions. But, since he would not repent, his sins gained control over him. His act, in open defiance to God's command, shows how strong sin had already become in his heart. After his disobedience at Gilgal, Saul's relation to God still seemed to be unchanged, but now all was different. The command to destroy the Amalekites who, without doubt, deserved God's punishment, was the means of revealing Saul's change of heart. At Gilgal, his position was precarious; here it was without danger. There it was difficult to obey; here it was an easy matter. How sin had grown in his heart! We do not marvel that his punishment is now more severe.

Samuel again becomes the messenger of God's wrath (15:10—11). "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king," God says to Samuel. Can God really repent? Does not 15:29 state that God is not a man, that he should repent? Can both statements be true? Indeed, they are. But we must remember that "to repent" has various meanings. When men repent, they show that they feel sorry over some wrong which they have done. Either they have committed some sin which they would rather have undone, or they have made some promise or threat which they would like to disavow. God

does not know this form of repentance, for He does nothing wrong, neither need He feel ashamed of anything which He has said. His promises are true and abiding. "Repent" also has the meaning of feeling pain and sorrow. In this sense the word is used here. God is not indifferent to the welfare of his children; He rather feels for them, rejoices when they do His will, and grieves, i. e., repents, when they will not obey His commandments. Thus when in the days of Noah men would not submit to His corrections, it repented Him that He had created man (Gen. 6:6). When, after obeying Jonah's call unto repentance, the inhabitants of Nineveh turned from their wicked ways, He repented of the evil that He had said He would do unto them (Jonah 3:10), i. e., He was grieved that they should perish. He did not punish as He had threatened; in fact, He could remain true to Himself without punishing, for He gives His promises to the godly so long as they remain true, and His threatenings to the ungodly so long as they abide in their wickedness. Nor should we be surprised that this kind of repentance is found in God; on the contrary, it should incite us to profound thanks since it shows that God does not rule over us as some unchangeable, lifeless, and loveless fate, but rather as a living and loving Being who feels for us and listens to our prayers. Thus God was not indifferent to Saul's development from good to bad. When He appointed him king, He desired his best. For this same reason He repented, i. e., He was sorrowful that Saul was again disobedient, and that He could not attain His divine aims in his life. Already at Gilgal the Lord had announced that Saul's kingdom would not be established; now Samuel must announce that God has rejected Saul (15:23, 26, 28), i. e., that Saul is unworthy of being king over God's people. God could not do otherwise. Any man who again and again rejected God's Word could not hope to retain Israel's kingship, for it was the special duty of Israel's king to act as God's representative, or agent, and to do the will of God, Israel's heavenly ruler.

Though Saul's punishment was just, Samuel was grieved and vexed (15:11). He could not become reconciled to its severity, for had not God Himself selected Saul? If God withdrew His hand from Saul, was not God's own honor at stake? Would not Israel's enemies ridicule and slander God's people; would not Israel's future be jeopardized? Such questions vexed Samuel. Like Moses, he cried all night long for Israel in prayer, that the punishment might be averted. He, the faithful, generous hearted servant of God, entertained no thoughts of jealousy or malice against Saul for having de-

prived him of his leadership in Israel. He rather pleaded with God that Saul might still retain his office as king. He never once thought of himself, but of Saul and the people, and of God's honor. After hours of fervent prayer, when he realized that God's purpose was firm and irrevocable, he rose early, came to Saul, and, as the ambassador of God, unflinchingly proclaimed God's punishment. Even now Saul does not own his guilt. He falsely says that he has performed God's commandment (15:13). Then coward-like, he lays the blame on the people (15:15) and seeks to hide his own disobedience (15:21). But Samuel loudly proclaims, "To obey is better than sacrifice." In being obedient we sacrifice more than sheep and oxen; we offer ourselves unto God. Where men are not willing to offer their own will, heart, and person to God, all other sacrifices are in vain, "they are an abomination unto the Lord." To rebel against God's Word is as sinful as to practise witchcraft (15:23), for he who practises witchcraft does not recognize God's will, but opposes it and seeks with the devil's power to gain his own ends. Later on, the king really espoused the cause of witchcraft (1 Sam. 28). Not until Saul saw that he had really been rejected and that his throne was in jeopardy (1 Sam. 15:22), did he descend to the confession: "I have sinned" and request Samuel: "I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord." Saul's heart, however, did not crave the forgiveness which he desired of Samuel. He was not in earnest. Verse 30 goes to show that he was not primarily interested in gaining forgiveness for his sins, but rather in evading or staying the punishment. He sought no reconciliation with God. He would gladly conform outwardly to God's will, if by doing so, he might retain the earthly crown and the honor of the throne. These appealed to him more highly than friendship with God and eternal life. Every form of repentance, however, which grieves only over the outward result of sin and does not recognize sin as an offence against God is earth-born and vain. Such repentance leads not to salvation, but to death (2 Cor. 7:10). As Samuel turned to leave, Saul laid hold upon the skirt of Samuel's mantle, and it rent (15:18). Saul must have seen in this incident a picture of the rending of his kingdom. After repeated appeals, Samuel remained to worship (15:30—31). Nothing was gained by Samuel's remaining, however, except that the people were left ignorant, for the time being, of Saul's rejection by God. Perhaps Samuel deemed it wise, because of Israel's enemies, not as yet publicly to publish the command of God. But from now on Samuel and Saul went different ways, Samuel no

longer visiting Saul (15:35). For what business had the prophet and mouthpiece of God to visit him who would not obey God's Word, and who could therefore no longer be God's representative in the kingdom? They parted on the question, "Shall the will of the visible or of the invisible ruler be supreme in Israel?" Saul still reigned many years over Israel—just how long the Old Testament nowhere states, especially since the original text is doubtful—Jewish tradition lets Saul reign 40 years, and St. Paul adopts this number (Act. 13:21). God suffered him to hold the throne, in part because of the people, in part because of his successor; because of the people, for they should learn that a king "as the other nations had" could never help them; because of his successor David, for he should learn the art of war and the life at court. In passing through much affliction, he should be trained for the throne.

One thing, before others, we learn from the history of Saul's life; namely this that he whom God has elected must do God's will and be God's own and that he who has committed sin and will not repent will be cast aside like a useless tool. So far Saul had not been eternally rejected; his soul might still be saved. He had lost only his throne, but the future would show whether his rejection as king would be made eternal; whether eternal damnation would be his lot.

Questions:—1. What part of the First Book of Samuel are we now studying?—2. Mention the contents of chapters 8—12!—3. Of chapters 13—15!—4. What event may be called the turning point in Saul's life?—5. Why was Saul not reconciled with God?—6. At what occasion did it become evident that Saul was a slave of sin?—7. What had the Amalekites done to merit destruction?—8. What lesson should teach us the fact that God remembers wicked deeds 400 years after they have been done?—9. Mention Saul's second grievous transgression!—10. Why was this second sin more grievous than the first?—11. What remarkable word of Scripture characterizes God's act in passing judgment on Saul?—12. In how far is it true that there is no repentance in God?—13. In what sense, however, may God be said to repent?—14. Why is this form of repentance consistent with God's being?—15. Why is this form of repentance in God a source of comfort to us?—16. Describe the punishment which God now meted out to Saul!—17. What effect did it have?—18. What effect on Samuel?—19. Show how Samuel proved his noble character!—20. Why may he be said to be a faithful prophet?—21. Mention the various incidents which now show the extent of Saul's sin!—22. Saul confesses his guilt because of which fearful word spoken by Samuel?—23. Was Saul sincere in his confession?—24. What did he fear more than his sins?—25. How does St.

Paul characterize repentance which grieves only over the outward results of sin?—26. Why should Saul and Samuel henceforth go different ways?—27. Why did not God remove Saul from the throne at once?—28. What lesson should we learn from Saul's life?—29. When we worship God, which word should we be mindful of?—30. Why is complete subjection to God's will even today better than external sacrifice and formal worship?—31. How does God regard our sacrifice, if we are not willing to surrender ourselves to Him?

3. At last, in his folly, Saul threw away his only chance of being saved. But in David God found and trained a king according to His divine will (chapters 16—31).—Read 1 Sam. 16:1—23; 17:1—54; 18:1—20; 19:1—7; 20:1—42; 23:1—28; 24:1—23; 26:1—25; 28:1—25; 31:1—13.

The third part of the First Book of Samuel may again be divided into two parts: 16:1—18:5, and 18:6—31:13. The first part tells how David was anointed king in Saul's stead, how, after conquering the Philistines, David found favor with the people, and how he won the friendship of Jonathan. The second part tells how Saul, jealous of David's success, tried with might and main to destroy him, how David was trained by God in the school of persecution for the kingship, and how Saul succumbed ever more and more to the wiles of the arch-enemy, until at last, by committing suicide, he surrendered himself forever into the devil's hands.

Israel's first king had been rejected because he disregarded the Lord's commands; but the kingdom should not cease with Saul. In days gone by, Moses had referred to the kingdom (Deut. 17:14—20; see page 171). When rejecting Saul, God had promised a successor (13:14; 15:28). But the new king should be a better man than Saul. Samuel, who had established the kingdom and who had announced Saul's rejection, should also anoint the new king. Samuel's thoughts still dwelt on Saul, for, though he recognized God's judgment as just, he could not suppress his sorrow about Saul. His disappointment was so keen that he was in danger of doubting God's mercy. It was high time that he shake off the spirit of sorrow lest it gave rise to sin. So God asked him 16:1, and sent him on a new mission. He should anoint one of the sons of **Jesse the Bethlehemite** in Saul's place. Bethlehem was situated in Judah. Since the days of Moses, the tribe of Judah had lived a quiet and secluded life, devoid of special honor or pomp. Now, however, it should come into prominence as the dying Jacob had foretold (Gen. 49:10). Jesse was a descendant of Ruth (Ruth 4:17). Samuel's reply to

God was not due to fear or unwillingness to obey, but rather to regard for Saul. No doubt, Samuel would have been glad to sacrifice his life in the service of God, if such sacrifice were necessary. Having watched the moral development of Saul (16:14), he feared that Saul might learn of his anointing a new king, and that he might so far forget himself as to slay God's prophet. Such a crime would only aggravate his guilt, for the Lord would most dreadfully avenge the death of His messenger. Because these motives prompted Samuel's reply, God showed him how he might, in the regular course of his duties, fulfill His command without attracting undue attention, so that no one, not even those in Bethlehem, would know that one of Jesse's sons had been anointed, and even David's own brothers would not know why he had been anointed (16:2-3). It was important that God's instructions be carefully observed, that the right one be made king. Samuel went his way full of confidence.

When Samuel appeared before Bethlehem, the elders trembled and asked, "Comest thou peaceably?" They feared that his visit might mean punishment (16:4). Samuel calms them by saying, "I come peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord, sanctify yourselves (cleanse yourselves according to the laws—Ex. 19:10-22) and come with me to the sacrifice." This reply was correct, for the Lord had enjoined him to sacrifice. That he came also for another purpose, the elders needed not to know. Besides inviting the elders, Samuel invited Jesse and his sons. He intended that all should take part in the offering, but he desired to eat the sacrificial meal with Jesse and his sons. From this incident we learn that Samuel was wont to instruct the people in God's ways whenever the opportunity arose. Since the removal of the ark from the tabernacle (1 Sam. 4:3-5, 11; 5:1; 6:1, 11-15, 21; 7:1, see page 253) men no longer worshipped solely at the sanctuary (Deut. 12:4 ff.).

Samuel performed his special task between the time of the sacrifice and the sacrificial meal. He probably selected this time because he would then be, not in the market place, but in the quiet home of Jesse. Here he could fulfill God's command without even the elders' becoming aware of his task. Secrecy was highly desirable since the elders would have informed Saul, and Saul would have sought to slay the newly anointed king. In selecting the new king, Samuel nearly made a mistake, for he judged, as men generally do, according to outward appearance. He should have waited for the Lord's instruction (16:3). But God sets aside his choice, reminding him that "the Lord seeth not as man seeth" (16:7). God judges,

not according to outward form and beauty, but to the state of man's heart. Not an energetic and generous minded man, but one who is obedient and who trusts in the Lord finds favor. Not one of Jesse's seven oldest sons reaches the standard set by God. Not until **David** appeared, whom Jesse had held unworthy of the sacrificial meal, did God instruct Samuel to anoint. Here we find most carefully observed the principle which St. Paul so forcefully expounds in the first epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:26—28), and which holds true in the kingdom of God. Though David was not so powerful as Eliab, nor so tall as Saul, he was not without comeliness, for he was a well proportioned youth, about twenty years old, ruddy of complexion, and with beautiful eyes (16:12). As Samuel anointed him, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, inwardly to direct and guide his life that he might become a true ruler of God's people. The act of anointing was done in silence. The brothers needed not to know the reason why David was anointed. Perhaps they thought that he had been made a scholar of the school of prophets (page 251); perhaps even David and Jesse did not grasp the true meaning of Samuel's act.

From the time of his anointment, David's whole life was under the special guidance of God. This guidance shows itself in a three-fold way. First, God sent him to Saul's court (16:14—23) that he might become personally acquainted with the duties and the responsibilities of a king. The Spirit of the Lord, which had filled Saul's heart with courage, confidence, and wisdom, had departed from Saul in consequence of his grievous sin, and an evil, melancholy spirit depressed his soul, until at times he fairly raved like a maniac. Yet Saul was not as yet condemned and lost. This spirit of frenzy should have driven him to the Lord in search of peace for his soul. At the advice of his servants, Saul sent for **David** and engaged him as **harp player**. David had learned to play on the harp while on the plains of Bethlehem. With his playing, David should dispel this gloomy spirit of sadness. Even in those days, it would seem, music, especially sacred music, was prized for its soothing and quieting effects upon the soul. And David's playing was not without its influence on Saul, but it could never take the place of the upright repentance found wanting in the king.

We see, secondly, that David's life was under God's special guidance from the fact that He lets David vanquish the giant **Goliath**, and that, with one stroke, as it were, He makes him the foremost man in Israel (17:1—58). God uses a new expedition against the Philis-

tines as the means of making David the savior of his country and of making his name known in all Israel. This new war took David from the court to his parents' humble home in Bethlehem where he again tended the flocks of his father. Though he would rather have entered the field against the Philistines, mindful of the fourth commandment, he remained at home and helped his father. But God Himself sent him into the field of battle just as the giant Goliath proposed, with great arrogance of language, that the outcome of the strife be determined by the result of a single combat between himself and any champion whom Israel might select. David heard the giant defy Israel and the Lord, and he saw the people in dismay (17:26, 36, 45). His heart burned as he listened to the words of reproach heaped upon the Lord and His people. He resolved to offer himself to the combat. Sweeping aside the foolish words of his oldest brother, he presented himself before king Saul, told him of his deeds as a shepherd, gained his confidence, and, trusting, not in strength of armor, but in the power of God, little fearing the giant and thinking only of Israel's and the Lord's honor, now put to shame, entered the fray, won the battle before Goliath had had time to lift his sword, thus achieving the honor of being the savior of his people. The size of Goliath (2.9 meters = 9 feet) though remarkable, is not at all without precedent. Skeletons have been unearthed equally as large in size; writers of apostolic times refer to people of the same dimensions; about 100 years ago a man lived in Ireland of the same size. Goliath's armor was in proportion to his bulk. The coat of mail, made of overlapping plates, or scales, of metal, weighed 5000 shekels, or 175 pounds; the iron head of his spear weighed 600 shekels, or 20 pounds. The staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam, about four to five inches in diameter. The fact that Saul questioned Abner, his general, regarding David (1 Sam. 17:55) is in no wise opposed to 1 Sam. 16:14—23; Saul asked in order to learn something about David's family ties and his race, for he had promised to enrich the man who would vanquish the giant and to give him his daughter in marriage (17:25). When David was his harp player, he was not interested in his family relations. But now the tables are turned. Abner told him not only of his parents (17:58), but also of his race (18:1), as it seems.

That David's life was under the special guidance of God, we learn, thirdly, from the fact that, after he had conquered the giant, he won the **friendship of Jonathan**, Saul's son, and the good will of the people. Jonathan's love for David was of special importance,

for Jonathan was not only the king's son, but also a tried warrior (1 Sam. 14) and heir apparent to the throne. God still loved him because of his faith in Him (1 Sam. 14:6). His friendship for David opened the doors of the best homes to David. Many times two heroes wax jealous of each other, but Jonathan acknowledged David as the man of the hour, and was willing to accede to him the first place which he had thus far held (1 Sam. 14:25) in the hearts of the people. True friendship knows no jealousy. Noble characters are ever without malice. In giving to David his whole armor, sword, bow, girdle, and all, Jonathan showed before all the people that he had a covenant with David. To David this gift should be a surety of his love. Perhaps the Lord had intended to foreshadow the time when David would, in truth, wear the royal garments. For the time being, Saul thanked David, and "set him over men of war." By his tact and wisdom, he gained the confidence of the people and the good will of Saul's servants (18:5). Thus the Lord raised David from obscurity to fame and he won for him the hearts of the mighty in the land. David had done nothing but to follow God's guidance. To remain quiet, faithfully to perform one's duties and to suffer God to lead, these are even today requisites of a godly life.

Questions:—1. Into how many parts may the First Book of Samuel be divided?—2. Mention the contents of the first, of the second, and of the third part!—3. Into how many sub-divisions may the third part again be divided?—4. Mention the contents of the first and of the second sub-division of the third part!—5. Show that it was not God's aim when he rejected Saul to abolish the kingdom!—6. How would you characterize Samuel's sorrow over Saul's rejection?—7. How did God free Samuel of his undue sorrow?—8. What tribe should attain the kingship?—9. Which prophecy should now find part fulfillment?—10. Why does Samuel hesitate in fulfilling the Lord's command?—11. How does the Lord view his considerations?—12. What prompted Samuel to hesitate?—13. What way out of the dilemma does God show Samuel?—14. God's instructions pre-suppose what custom of Samuel?—15. How could Samuel arrange to sacrifice in various parts of the land when the Lord had designated only one place of sacrifice (Deut. 12:4 ff.)?—16. To judge from the questions raised by the elders of Bethlehem, what other duty must Samuel have had?—17. Why was Samuel's reply truthful?—18. What arrangement did Samuel make at Bethlehem that his special task was not revealed?—19. Explain why Samuel nearly made a mistake in his choice of a king!—20. Explain the word which God here speaks to Samuel!—21. What happened when David was anointed?—22. From how many incidents does it become clear that God was guiding David's life?—23. How do you understand the words: "An evil spirit came over Saul"?—24. Of what could

David's music not take the place?—25. In how far was it important that David became Saul's harp player?—26. Chapter 17 seems to reflect the guiding hand of God. Show that this is so!—27. Which words, spoken by the giant, distressed David?—28. Show that David entered the combat trusting only in God!—29. Show that Goliath's size is not without precedent!—30. Why is 1 Sam. 17: 55 not opposed to 1 Sam. 16: 14—23?—31. Why was Jonathan's friendship for David of utmost importance to David?—32. What lesson may we learn for our own lives from the life of David while under the guidance of God?

So far everything which David had attempted under the guidance of God had been crowned with success, but now in the second sub-division of the third part of the First Book of Samuel all is changed. It shows that his way to the throne was through much sorrow and affliction. Before ascending the throne, two things should come to pass. First, David must be trained in the school of persecution for his high station in life. Secondly, Saul should show whether he would persist in his sin, oppose the divine influence of God's spirit, and so exclude himself from eternal salvation.

The conflict with the Philistines was not ended with David's victory over Goliath or with the subsequent defeat (17: 51—53). Many years, a desultory warfare was carried on. It ended, however, with their expulsion from the land of Israel. When the conquerors returned from the slaughter and the women came forth from their towns to greet them with their songs and music, Saul's jealousy was aroused. He became so embittered that he sought twice, in fits of frenzied melancholy, to pin David to the wall with a javelin. But David's cleverness and God's protecting hand saved David from death (118: 6—11). Saul now began to realize, however, that David was under the Lord's protection and that possibly he was the man, worthier than himself, who was destined to succeed him and to supersede his descendants (1 Sam. 15: 28). He also realized that the Lord had truly cast him off. Thus David became the object, not merely of envy and jealousy, but of dislike and hatred. And Saul's dislike and apprehensions increased in proportion to the abilities and discretion which David evinced (18: 12—16). But David remained at his post. He might have forever left the court and Saul's service, but he remained true to the conviction that Saul had acted in a fit of frenzy. He would not believe that the king had resolved to kill him. God had placed him at the court, and it did not behoove him to forsake it, unless his life demanded it. For the time being, Saul made no further attempt to slay him, though he still harbored the

same feeling of hatred and malice. He had profited by his former attempts. Now he hoped that the Philistines would destroy him. To aid them, he sent him on dangerous expeditions. Regardless of his former promise (1 Sam. 17:25) to give him his daughter to wife, he tried to lure him into death by again promising him his daughter if he slay one hundred Philistines. David performs all tasks allotted to him because the Lord protected him. Instead of destroying David, Saul was constrained to make him his son-in-law (18:17—30). Thus David became the friend of the king's son, the husband of the king's daughter, and the favorite of the people. God Himself raised him to these honors, desirous of showing, as it were, what He later announced through His apostles (Rom. 8:31).

But Saul could not smother his hatred, which at last became so ungovernable that he avowed it to Jonathan and to his courtiers, charging them to take a favorable opportunity of putting David to death (18:1). Jonathan apprised David of the command and even remonstrated with his father. This he did with such effect that Saul solemnly swore to make no further attempt against David's life (18:1—7). A new victory over the Philistines quickened the smoldering fires of jealousy into burning flames of hatred. Saul burned to murder David. But Saul's daughter Michal saved him (19:8—17), and he fled to Ramah, to the abode of the aged Samuel. Even here he was not safe, but God Himself intervened in his behalf, that no one could harm him. Saul's messengers and even Saul himself fell into an ecstasy and "prophesied" as they came into the neighborhood of the school of the prophets near Ramah (Naioth in 19:18, 23 means the abode of the prophets, see page 251). Their murderous tools fell from their hands, and, like the scholars of the prophets, they lay in an ecstatic trance, praising God (19:18—24). The messengers, and before all, Saul, should learn that God's spirit working through Samuel and the prophets, is stronger than the evil spirit which sought to murder David, and that whosoever should seek to slay David would oppose the spirit of the Lord. Saul especially, who had often opposed the Lord's spirit, should learn that God's power is supreme. In a moment He can cast man into the dust. This incident before Ramah was the last warning which God gave Saul. He called to him, as it were, "Do not oppose any longer the Holy Spirit! It will be hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (Acts 9:5). When Paul felt the divine power on his way to Damascus, he let the Spirit act on his heart, and was converted; when Saul first experienced the Spirit's power (1

Sam. 10:10—11), he also suffered the Spirit to work on his heart, and he became a new being. But now the effects of God's Spirit were only external, or passing. He lay in an ecstatic trance, swept to the ground like a tree by the wind, but his heart was not touched. It rejected God's love and closed the door to His Spirit.

We are not surprised that Saul's moral decline was rapid. Chapter 20 tells how enraged the king became when David did not appear at the feast of the new moon, and when Jonathan remonstrated with him over David's absence. It tells how the king broke forth into grossest abuse of Jonathan, assuring him that his succession to the throne would never be secure while David lived, and how he, in his frenzy, threw a javelin to smite his own son. Through these last deeds it became evident that God's attempts to change Saul's murderous plans had been in vain (20:24—34). According to their agreement (20:1—23), Jonathan intimated to David the course he was to take (20:35—42). So David could do nothing but flee. Though most bitter persecutions now followed, David could always rejoice in the fact that he had done his duty at the court, that God had been his guide and stay, and that he had found a friend who had been faithful even when he had discovered that not he, the king's son and heir, but David should receive the throne. Jonathan's fidelity will go down in history as a glorious example of true friendship.

"David fleeing before Saul"—these words we might write over the following chapters (1 Sam. 21—31). The growing persecutions strengthened and increased David's spirit of humility, and the sorrows purified his character, as we learn from chapter 21. It was not wrong for him to take the shew-bread from the sanctuary which could lawfully be eaten only by the priests (page 178), otherwise Jesus would not have spoken regarding it as He did (Matt. 12:3 ff.). But it was wrong for him to make Ahimelech, the priest, believe that he had been sent by the king on urgent business, in order to induce Ahimelech to give him of the show-bread; as it was also wrong for him to feign himself mad before Achish, king of the Philistines, in order to escape death (21:11—16). The first wrong against the priest David later confessed, for when Saul, following the information given by Doeg, had Ahimelech and his whole family murdered, he exclaimed to Abiathar, the only individual of the family of the priest who had escaped, "I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house" (22:6—23). This incident should forcibly remind us not to lie, not even in times of need. God can

ever deliver us. He needs no lies to help Him. From the murder of Ahimelech and his family we also learn that Saul had become ever more a slave of sin. From 22:1—2 it also becomes clear that Saul's rule was characterized by many deeds of unrighteousness, for how else could one explain the fact that 400, later even 600, men would follow the leadership of David? They must have been dissatisfied with Saul's government. Men do not, as a rule, follow some one who is a fugitive. The company of these men must have been a source of joy and consolation for David when in distress. For his parents the outcast found a place of refuge in the land of Moab. He himself returned according to God's command to the land of Judah that no one might accuse him of having espoused the cause of Israel's enemies. In the days which follow we find him first here, then there. Now he is in the forest of Hareth (22:5), then in the border-town of Keilah where he routs the Philistines. From here he flees, warned by the oracle that the ungrateful people of Keilah would deliver him to the king (23:1—13). This oracle was the ephod of the high priest which Abiathar had brought with him when he escaped from Nob. It contained the breastplate with the so-called Urim and Thummim (see page 184). By virtue of Urim and Thummim it revealed God's will. Though David was distressed over the ingratitude of the inhabitants of Keilah, his heart was strengthened over the visit of Jonathan in the wilderness of Ziph (23:16—18). Jonathan was perfectly aware that David was destined to be the next king, but no thought of envy passed through his noble soul. He even rejoiced in his friend's fortune, and was well satisfied to take second place in the affection of his people. Is not this true friendship "before the Lord?" So far as we know, Jonathan and David parted at Ziph—to meet no more. Not long after this meeting, certain inhabitants of Ziph acquainted Saul with David's whereabouts. Saul hastened to the place and was about to surround him when he was providentially called off by the intelligence of a sudden incursion into the country by the Philistines. Later this place was appropriately called Sela-hammah-lekoth, i. e., rock of parting, or separation, for it separated David and the king when all avenues of escape were cut off. It showed that the Lord can deliver when human wisdom and might fail (23:19—28). After Saul had repulsed the Philistines, he returned to follow upon the tracks of Jesse's son—so inveterately was he bent upon his foul purpose. Apparently, he looked upon David's destruction as his special mission, though he must have recognized that, in pursuing him, he was at odds with God; that, in fact, he

was fighting the Lord (1 Sam. 13:14; 15:28). Meanwhile David removed to the district of Engedi, toward the western extremity of the Dead Sea. Saul pursued him into this region; but here he learned to know David's magnanimity of spirit, his love for him, his arch-enemy, and his respect for the anointed of the Lord. Saul can not but weep and confess, "Thou art more righteous than I!" He recognized that David would receive the kingdom, and begged that he would not destroy "his name out of his father's house" (24:1-23). Will Saul in future days still entertain the conviction which he here so freely acknowledged? Eternal condemnation stares him in the face, if he persists in opposing the spirit of the Lord.

Questions:—1. Into how many parts may we divide the First Book of Samuel?—2. How many chapters does each part comprise?—3. Mention the contents of the first, of the second, and of the third part.—4. Into how many sub-divisions may the third part be divided?—5. Mention the contents of each sub-division.—6. From which three incidents can one clearly see that David stood under God's special guidance?—7. Why was David not permitted to ascend the throne after he had gained renown?—8. What changed Saul's love for David into hatred?—9. Why did Saul at last fear David?—10. Mention the main reason for this fear.—11. How does Saul seek to destroy David?—12. How did all attempts to destroy David end?—13. What people should kill David?—14. Tell how the Lord saved David three times in succession.—15. How did He save him the third time?—16. Mention the importance of God's wonderful and direct interference.—17. Why was God's act here important for Saul?—18. At what occasion did it become evident that this solemn warning was in vain?—19. Why is Jonathan's fidelity a glorious example of true friendship?—20. What words may we write over chapters 21-31?—21. Show that David's character had to be purified in the fire of sorrow.—22. What stand shall the Christian take over against a lie of necessity?—23. From which deed of Saul's does it become manifest that he was becoming ever more a child of sin?—24. What other incident seems to show that Saul's rule was characterized by unrighteousness?—25. How did David profit by Saul's unrighteousness?—26. What did Saul seem to regard as his life's mission?—27. Give an outline of David's afflictions as he fled from place to place!—28. Show how David often suffered from the disloyalty of the people.—29. Show how God protected him though men betrayed him.—30. When did David, while being persecuted, achieve his noblest victory?—31. Who was a source of special joy to him in the bitterest hours of his sufferings?—32. Why should we suppose that, after the incident at Engedi, Saul would no longer persecute David?

While the persecutions of David were at their height, the aged Samuel died (25:1). The people had every reason to lament his

death, for with him their reformer, judge, prophet, and priest, had passed away. As reformer, he had, linking his work to that of Moses, brought them to a more profound understanding of God's laws, and had freed them, for many years, from their western archenemies, the Philistines. As prophet, judge, and priest, he had guided their steps, and, as the messenger of God, had ushered in that new, formative period of Israel's history, which is called the Time of the Kings. Through word and deed he had also made it plain, even to his own generation, to both king and people, that the kingdom of Israel would only then retain divine favor when it would acknowledge its complete dependence upon God; when it would recognize that it was only the outward, visible representative of the invisible God, the true King of Israel; and when it would give heed to the words of the divers prophets, sent by God. If king and people had given heed to Samuel's advice, and had lived as directed—Saul did follow God's directions during the first years of his reign,—what inestimable blessings God would have showered upon them! The more Saul departed from the ways of God and of His prophets; the more the people had to endure Saul's unrighteousness and tyranny; and the more they had to groan under the oppressing, degrading conditions of the times: the more they must have recognized the sterling worth of Samuel as they carried him to his grave; the more they must have realized how grievously they had sinned against him.

Most of all, David must have sorrowed over Samuel's death, for he had lost more than the rest. He had lost the visible surety of his kingship over Israel. At first David may not have grasped the full meaning of his anointment (p. 275), but, as he fled before Saul (19:18) to Samuel, Samuel, without doubt, enlightened him as to its true significance. Thus Ramah, the abode of the prophet, had become for him a source of consolation and a surety of his kingship. Now, however, that Samuel was gone, David had only the prophet's words to strengthen him in his trials.

After Samuel's death, David removed southward into the wilderness of Paran, i. e., into the northern part of the Arabian desert (25:1). Here he found more food for himself and the 600 men who had assembled about him (25:13) than in the wilderness of Judah. Every now and then, however, he returned to the hills of Judah in order to satisfy the cravings of his warrior band. On one of these expeditions, he came in contact with **Nabal**, who lived in Maon, southeast of Hebron, a man of vast possessions in Carmel, a place about one half hour's journey from Maon (this Carmel must not be

confounded with the Mt. Carmel which borders on the Mediterranean Sea) 25:2—44. David requested that Nabal, who was making great preparations for the entertainment of his people during the time of sheep shearing, supply him with provisions. This request was not at all singular. According to all usage, Nabal ought to have anticipated it. Even today Arabian sheiks of the neighboring wilderness observe this custom of requesting gifts whenever some near-by place observes a feast. Then he should have told himself that David's troop had been of great advantage to his shepherds, for David's men had respected his property, and had even protected his flocks (vv. 7 and 8). Certainly, Nabal owed him a debt of gratitude. This request for supplies Nabal churlishly denied. Heaping insult upon reproach, he called David a deserter, thus revealing his own true character, as suggested in his name of Nabal, i. e. "fool." In his foolhardiness, avarice blinded his eyes where other men are prone to be generous (he was preparing for a feast), so that he failed to recognize that he owed a debt of gratitude and that his churlish answer might cost him his life and property. That David became highly enraged at such treatment is easily understood. Yet his conduct was not correct. He was not justified in his desire to observe the principle: As you do unto me, so I will do unto you. His rash purpose to kill Nabal might have had serious consequences for his station as future king and for the peace of his soul. God kindly averted the execution of his cruel design, and saved him from bloodshed (vv. 13, 21—22). **Abigail** is in all ways the counterpart of her husband. She is thoughtful, generous, pious, and beautiful. How cleverly she dissuaded David from his foul purpose! She went out to meet him laden with rich gifts (vv. 18—27), asked that upon her head should come the iniquity of Nabal (23—25), pointed out that it was God who through her had saved him from murder (26), and that God's righteousness would judge his enemies and make of them "Nabals," i. e., men of folly. In closing, she promised him, in case he would spare her husband, God's richest blessing (vv. 28—31). Under her hand David's passion grew calm, and he vowed not to harm Nabal. As a messenger of God, Abigail had shown David the path God would have him follow. From this incident, as also from the story which follows (vv. 36—43), we learn that this entire chapter was placed here in order to bring home to us a two-fold lesson: 1. how God watched over His servant David and protected him from everything which might jeopardize his position as king; 2. how He turned David's afflictions into joy and blessing, for later, when Nabal had died, Abigail be-

came David's wife. Since Saul had taken Michal, his daughter, from David and had given her to another (v. 44), David may have considered himself free to marry again. From v. 43, however, we learn that David was also married to Ahinoam. This goes to show that monogamy, God's original purpose regarding marriage (Gen. 1:27; 2:18, 22—24) was not fully realized, due perhaps, in part, to the profound influence exerted by the example of Jacob. The Christian observes marriage as it was first instituted by God and as it was enjoined by Jesus (Matt. 19:3—9). Polygamy brings with it its own curse. David's life and the history of Amnon and Absalom (2 Sam. 13) bear out this truth.

Chapter 26 shows how Saul, unmindful of David's generous forbearance in the desert of Engedi (chapter 24), sought to get David into his power. Hardly had David returned to the wilderness of **Ziph**, in order perhaps to take possession of Nabal's property, when the inhabitants revealed his whereabouts to Saul (26:1). With 3000 warriors,—since the incident of 13:2 these men may have comprised Saul's standing army,—Saul went out to apprehend David and his men. Instead of taking David, however, he again came into David's power, and was again spared by David. This story is not a mere repetition of the former story. The place is different. Then the story shows marked progress, for not only is David's courage more pronounced,—with a single escort, his nephew Abishai, brother of Joab, who later became his general, he stole into the camp of his foes—, but also his power over himself is more marked. He again spared Saul though ingratitude had been the sole reward of his first act of mercy. Even Saul seemed to have learned since the first incident (24:18—22), for he explicitly stated: "I have sinned. I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly." When David remarks: "If the Lord hath stirred thee up against me, let Him accept an offering," he means: If God is inciting you to sin by persecuting me, an innocent man, then it must be God's punishment that you have hardened your heart against Him, for God never incites him to sin who desires to do no evil, but only him who has hardened his heart and who would remain in his sins. God does this in order to punish the sinner, who suffers the evil which is sleeping in his heart to awaken into evil action. If it is true in the case of Saul that he has hardened his heart against God and that God now incites him to persecute David, then he should bring an offering. That David, who wrote Psalm 51:16—17 thought of more than a mere external offering is highly probable. He rather thought of an offering brought by

a wounded and contrite heart. Thus his remark would mean: If you are incited by God, as punishment for the hardness of your heart, to undertake such persecutions, then it is high time that you put away such hardness of heart, that you repent, and bring God the offerings of a contrite spirit. Then God will no longer stir you up to such evil deeds. With the figure of speech of 26:20 David desired to say: Who would consider a single flea so important and harmful that he would collect all of his forces in order to catch it; who would pursue a single partridge into the mountains, when he might hunt partridges by the hundreds in the valleys? Saul's hunt for David seemed to David as great a folly (cf. 24:15).

From his hiding-place David had also said (26:18—20): "But if they be the children of men who incite you to these persecutions, then cursed be they before the Lord; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord." By the latter expression he meant: Who have driven me from the land of Israel into a land where men worship idols and not Jahve (26:19). Chapter 27 tells how David left his country, in order to escape from Saul's persecutions, and entered the land of Israel's enemies, the Philistines. He repaired to Achish, king of the Philistines. His flight to Achish was certainly a token of little faith, disobedience, and folly. It was a token of little faith, for David should have known that God could and would protect the life of him whom he had appointed king over Israel. It was a token of disobedience, for David should have remembered what the prophet Gad had told him about sojourning into a foreign land (22:5). It was also a token of folly, for he should have considered that, though he might now expect to be more favorably received than the first time (21:11), surrounded as he was by 600 men and persecuted by king Saul, he, who had been appointed by God as king over Israel and as the Philistines' greatest enemy, would become subject to the Philistine rule. From the very beginning, he found it necessary, in order not to enter into warfare with his own people, to live apart from king Achish. Thus he petitioned the king for a residence-place some distance from Gath, the royal city. The king gave him Ziklag (27:5—7). From here he undertook punitive excursions against the ancient predatory enemies of Israel who lived along the southern frontiers (v. 8), for Ziklag was situated either southeast of Gaza or south of Beersheba. He made Achish believe, however, that he was contending with Israel or with Israel's allies (v. 10). David's relation to Achish was therefore based on falsehood and deception. In order to hide his treachery

he utterly destroyed, in all these excursions, man, woman, and child (vv. 11—12). What a precarious situation David was creating for himself if the Philistines should decide to move against Israel! Here we learn what terrible consequences may ensue if man goes his own ways irrespective of God's will, if because of lack of trust in God he does not heed God's commands.

Questions:—1. Into how many parts may the First Book of Samuel be divided?—2. How far do these separate parts extend, and what is the contents of each part?—3. Which chapters deal with David's flight before Saul?—4. Mention the various incidents of chapters 21—24.—5. Which important event took place while David's persecutions were at their height?—6. Why did Israel have every reason to sorrow over the death of Samuel?—7. From the very beginning, Samuel sought to make the relationship between which two offices plain?—8. When, therefore, would the kingdom in Israel have in no wise stood in opposition to the theocracy, i. e., the kingship of God in Israel?—9. Why did David have special cause to lament Samuel's death?—10. Mention the two-fold lesson which the story of David, Nabal, and Abigail would teach us.—11. Why was David's request not out of the ordinary?—12. Why was Nabal's conduct foolish?—13. How would you criticize David's design to avenge himself?—14. Show in how far Abigail was prudent!—15. In what respect may Abigail be called a messenger of God?—16. In what way might David, who had married Michal, feel justified in marrying Abigail?—17. How, according to the New Testament, would David's marriage with Ahinoam be viewed?—18. In what way may the reader of the Old Testament recognize that polygamy does not find favor with God?—19. Show that David's second act of forbearance is not a mere repetition of, but rather an advance over the first act!—20. Explain the first half of 26:19.—21. Explain the second half of 26:20!—22. What would you say regarding David's flight to the Philistines?—23. In what respect did it show little faith?—24. In what respect did it show disobedience?—25. In what respect folly?—26. What should we learn from his act?

Saul's kingdom was, it became evident, fast failing, and general discontent filled the land. From 1 Chronicles 12:1—7 and 19—22 we learn that a large number of brave men deserted Saul and united with David at Ziklag. Perhaps this is the reason why the Philistines at this time desired to enter the field against Saul. With one stroke, they may have hoped to conquer Saul and his people. For the decisive battle, they selected the spacious plain of Jezreel, that great battle-field of nations (cf. Judges 6:33; 2 Kings 23:29). Shunem, the place where the Philistines assembled, lies on the north end, and the heights of Gilboa where Israel assembled on the south end of the

plain (28:4). When Saul saw the formidable army of his enemy, his heart failed him. Presentiments of coming events cast deep shadows over his troubled mind (v. 5). His evil conscience recalled the words of Samuel that sooner or later the kingdom would be taken from him. Should this time now be at hand? At all events, he desired an answer to this question. Had Samuel been alive, he should probably have gone to him for counsel. But Samuel was dead (28:3 again emphasizes 25:1). So Saul took recourse to the means at his command. He inquired of the Lord (26:8), but the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim and Thummim, which the high priest wore on his ephod (see page 184), nor by prophets (28:6). But this need not surprise us, for how could he, who had hardened his heart against God and who would not repent of his sins, expect to find favor in God's sight that God would unfold for him the future? In his dismay, Saul now sought help from the powers of darkness. He **must know** the outcome of the battle. If God refused to advise him, he would seek counsel of the devil, though his conduct should be opposed to the plain words of God (Deut. 18:9—12), though he knew that he was doing wrong, and that his own laws, the laws of Israel, would be violated (28:3—9, 10). Thus he who will not acknowledge the Lord succumbs to the wiles of the devil. Saul gained his end. Samuel appeared from the abode of the dead clad in his prophetic mantle (1 Sam. 15:27). Verse 13 reads: "I saw gods ascending out of the earth." This means: I saw a supernatural, awe-inspiring form ascend. Samuel appeared, not through the art of the woman, since she herself was highly astonished, but through the **power of God** who rules over the departed and who can let them appear and be known by the living. But how was Saul profited? In unmistakable words he learned that the doom declared long since because of his disobedience in dealing with the Amelekites (vv. 16—19) would be accomplished on the morrow—tomorrow he and his sons should be numbered with the dead. At these heavy tidings the king fell down as one dead. From the outset his heart failed him (20—25). The appearance of Samuel is the result of God's purpose to punish and judge the king. It was to inaugurate the impending day of doom.

In this connection we hear of a form of **sorcery** which seeks to evoke the spirits of the dead. Since times immemorial sorcery and soothsaying, or divination, go hand in hand in heathen religions. Even today every form of heathenism carries in its bosom both sorcery and soothsaying. Whether it be the heathenism of **darkest** Africa, or that of some "enlightened" pagan living in a **civilized**

world makes little difference. The soothsayer desires to **know**, the sorcerer to **do** hidden things. In both cases, man aims to break the bounds which God has set for him. As Eve was tempted by Satan to eat of the forbidden fruit, hoping to attain divine knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 3:5), so the soothsayer, loath to abide by the knowledge which God has given him, and the sorcerer, loath to abide by the deeds which God has permitted him to do, are tempted to transgress God's commandments, hoping to acquire something of God's omniscient or omnipotent power. Their endeavors are, of course, not only ungodly, but also in direct opposition to God's will; therefore, they are diabolical. That this is true we may easily glean from the fact that both sorcery and soothsaying aim to learn or to do things which God's wisdom has hidden from our ken, and that both aim to wrest certain secrets, as knowledge of the future, possession of certain gifts, warding off of some evil, of some illness, or affliction, from the domain of the unknown, regardless of God's gracious will and wisdom. Also Saul sought to wrest from God what He had graciously hidden from his sight. How much more bravely he would have entered the conflict if he had not known the outcome of the battle! Even when sorcery and soothsaying do not invoke the powers of darkness, they show the spirit of revolt against God, and are diabolical. He who will abide in the bounds which God has set for him, who will trust God from his whole heart, knowing that He will hide nothing which were good for him to understand or to possess, and that He will not suffer anything to harm him,—he will be guarded by virtue of his faith in God against temptations to practice sorcery or divination. The Christian refrains from such practices, for Scripture tells him that sorcery and soothsaying are always a sign of heathenism (Deut. 18:9—12). When temptations assail him he also reminds himself of such passages as Gal. 5:20 and Rev. 21:8, 21; 22:15. It makes no difference, so far as God is concerned, whether he who visits a sorcerer or soothsayer falls into the hands of a swindler, or charlatan, who deceives him through subtle tricks, or whether he deals with one who possesses certain natural powers as those of clairvoyance and magnetism, which most people do not possess, or whether he visits someone who practices black art and invokes the aid of the devil. The witch, or sorceress, of Endor, seems to have belonged to the first class of sorcerers, who deceive or delude. According to v. 21 she had a special room or curtain in or behind which she practiced her art. When the spirit arose, she was horrified, and cried

with a loud voice, for she did not seem to expect that Samuel would really appear. But however we may regard her and her art, it is a fact that soothsayers and sorcerers at times really work wonders through the power of the devil. This we may already glean from the fact that sins of sorcery and divination are inseparably united with heathenism, which is subject to the special power of Satan and his spirits. In the last days Satan will work "with all power and signs and lying wonders" (2 Thess. 2:9), even more so than he works today. If the angels of God are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14), may not the evil spirits of Satan minister to man's downfall and damnation? Also what is called **spiritism** today—the conjuring of and communicating with departed spirits—is not altogether based on fraud and delusion. Evil spirits are also here at times active in striving to gain control of the "mediums" and of those who frequent their places of sin. It is a queer coincidence that the hearts of those who visit the dens of spiritism are closed to the benevolent influences of God's Holy Spirit. Whosoever is convinced that God took his beloved ones in death and that, though it may seem hard to bear, God did what was right and best, will not seek to defy God's will by visiting mediums, but will reconcile himself to His ways. He will not seek to unite the ties by force, perhaps even by invoking the powers of darkness, which God has severed for the time being, otherwise he would be found battling against God.

Chapters 29 and 30 are now inserted into the narrative before the story of the decisive battle in the valley of Jezreel is told. We learn in these chapters how David conducted himself when he was driven to the dreadful alternative of taking the field either for or against his brethren, how God extricated him from this difficulty (29:1—11), how he returned to Ziklag and found the city pillaged and reduced to ashes by the Amalekites, how his men, when they discovered that their wives and children had been dragged into captivity, rose up against him, even threatening him with death (30:1—6), and how, when he had asked counsel of God (30:7—8), he pursued the Amalekites, re-captured all they had taken, and gained so considerable a booty that he was enabled to send presents to all the cities and districts of southern Judah which had been favorable to his cause (30:10—31). In these two chapters David's character is ennobled by many beautiful traits. Especially noteworthy is his trait of seeking the counsel of God in his affliction (30:7—8). The ephod which is here mentioned is that of the high priest containing Urim and Thummim

(see page 184). According to this narrative, there must have been two high priests in those days, the one with Saul (28:6), and the other with David (compare 23:9 and 22:20). But also many dark traits are apparent in his character. Foremost we note his acts of equivocation, hypocrisy, and ingratitude while in the lands of king Achish (28:1—2; 29:1—11). Certainly the heathen Achish appears nobler than David. No wonder that certain expositors would give the palm for character to Saul and Achish rather than to David. But they forget that the spark of new life which the Holy Spirit had kindled in David's heart and which all sins and weaknesses had not quenched was more acceptable to God than all the natural excellencies of character which Saul and Achish possessed. This new life, weak as it was, had its origin in God, while the excellencies of Achish were the result of his own nature. The noblest, however, that man begets is as nothing compared with that which God creates through His Holy Spirit. From these chapters we clearly learn: If David had not been under the special guidance of God, he would have perished, and would never have attained the throne.

After this digression follows the story of the great **battle in the valley of Jezreel** (31:1—6). The battle was decided as Samuel had foretold. The Israelites fled into the heights of Gilboa. Though they fought desperately, the enemy pursued them and slew great numbers. When Saul saw that Jonathan was slain, and that he alone remained, despair filled his heart, and he fell upon his sword. When the remainder of the army, west of Gilboa and east thereof, facing the Jordan, laid down their arms, the Philistines had become masters of the entire northern Canaan. The next day the Philistines treated Saul's body with such indignity that it seeks its parallel in history, but the valiant men of Jabesh whom Saul had once saved from destruction (11:1—11) and who still cherished his memory rendered him last honors (31:8—13). That the Philistines treated Saul so shamefully showed that they recognized in him a powerful enemy. Just how long Saul reigned, the Old Testament nowhere states, but Paul mentions 40 years as the time of his reign in the Book of Acts (Acts 13:21). Saul was indeed a powerful adversary. Had he been true to God, he would undoubtedly have been invincible. But because he would not follow the way marked out for him by God's Spirit, he lost the throne of Israel for himself and for his children; because he would not listen to God's love which sought to lead him to repentance, but rather hardened his heart, he trifled away his eternal salvation and ended in total darkness and night. "Let him that thinketh he stand-

eth take heed lest he fall." "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Questions:—1. With what does the last part of the First Book of Samuel deal?—2. From what may we learn that, after David's flight to the Philistines, Saul's power began to decline?—3. What, therefore, did the Philistines plan to do about this time?—4. How did Saul show that he knew that the crisis in his reign had arrived?—5. In what way did it become evident that he was trying to force an answer from God as to the outcome of the impending battle?—6. In what way did Saul's visit with the witch of Endor bring him in direct opposition to God?—7. What could have prompted him to visit the witch?—8. Characterize the witch, or sorceress, of Endor.—9. How did Samuel, nevertheless, appear?—10. Why did God permit Samuel's spirit to ascend from the abode of the dead?—11. With what are sorcery and soothsaying always united?—12. What difference do you note between a sorcerer and a soothsayer?—13. What great mistake do both make?—14. Why are their practices always ungodly and diabolical?—15. Why is this true especially here?—16. Who is best guarded against the temptations of seeking recourse to soothsayers and sorcerers?—17. What should keep the Christian from such sins even though his faith is weak?—18. Of what is sorcery often the result?—19. Show that sorcery need not always, however, be the product of fraud or of misused natural powers!—20. When especially shall, according to Scripture, the powers of darkness do many wonders and signs?—21. How should we judge spiritism?—22. In what way does he who practices spiritism come in conflict with God even though no evil powers shall be involved?—23. Mention the contents of Chapters 29 and 30.—24. How does David's character appear in these two chapters?—25. Why does God, however, esteem him more highly than Achish?—26. If God had not placed David under His special guidance, why would David have lost the throne?—27. How did the decisive battle in the valley of Jezreel end?—28. In what way did the Philistines show that they regarded Saul as a very formidable enemy?—29. When would Saul have remained their invincible adversary?—30. What lesson does Saul's whole history bring home to us?

The Second Book of Samuel: 1. David ascends the throne of Israel and enters into incessant warfare with the followers of the house of Saul 1—4. Read 1:1—27; 2:1—7; 2:8—17.

An Amalekite who had made his home in Israel brought David the crown and armlet which Saul had worn. Thinking to win royal rewards, he boasted that he had slain Saul with his own hands. His expectations were grievously disappointed; for David, believing his statement, caused him to be put to death as one who had not feared to slay the Lord's anointed (1:1—16). From this incident we learn

that, though Saul was David's personal enemy, David held Saul's office most sacred (compare 1 Sam. 24:7; 26:11), and that he even mourned over the death of Saul and Jonathan. The beautiful and affecting elegy which he wrote on their death gives us a deep insight into his heart (1:17—27). The elegy may be divided into 3 parts as follows: 1) vv. 19—21, general sorrow for the fallen heroes, the glory of Israel; 2) vv. 22—24, sorrow for Saul and Jonathan, the two great heroes; 3) vv. 25—27, David's personal sorrow for his noble friend Jonathan. The elegy is especially noteworthy, because it contains no thought of malice or of personal satisfaction over the death of Saul, but only profound sorrow for the inglorious outcome of the battle, especially for the king and the loss of life in Israel. The national element rather than the personal element everywhere crops into the foreground, just as the future king should write. Even in his description of Saul, David emphasizes only the great and noble, those characteristics which Saul showed so well during the first years of his reign. In inditing this poem, David, therefore, unconsciously, erected a monument to himself, as well as to Saul and Jonathan. He showed that, though many dark traits still blemished his character, at bottom, his heart was good and noble. We are not surprised to see that from now on his way leads upward and that his time of kingship has truly begun. His elegy received the name of "bow" (v. 18), for it is a song of war and battle. It was later taken up into the Book of Jasher, i. e., the glorious, that famous collection of Israelitish national war songs which also contained the story of Joshua's heroic faith (Joshua 10:13). This collection was later lost, but it must have been known to the author of the Second Book of Samuel.

When the proper obsequies had been rendered, David sought to act as the new conditions due to Saul's death demanded it. But he would do nothing without God's approbation. Having sought the Lord, he removed with his people to **Hebron**, where the representatives of the tribe of Judah awarded him the sceptre. He was now thirty years old. Without raising a finger to attain it, David began to assume that station for which God had designated him at his anointment. He who can abide God's time and who will suffer God to lead him, receives even today the blessings which God has promised to the godly (2:2—4). Even when David had attained to royal power, he harbored no thoughts of revenge, but rather sent his messengers to the men of Jabesh and commended them for their loyalty toward luckless Saul (vv. 4—7). In sending these messengers, David, of

course, also had a political end in view. As the close of v. 7 shows, he hoped to gain the people of Jabesh to his side, for their support would have been of great importance. As yet his activities were restricted to the small sphere of the tribe of Judah, and Jabesh, which lies in the territory east of the Jordan, would have given him a welcome opening, but for the present the people of Jabesh would not acknowledge him as their king. On the contrary, after the battle in the valley of Jezreel, Saul's general, **Abner**, proclaimed Saul's only surviving son, the forty year old Ishbosheth, king. Undoubtedly, it was not loyalty, but personal ambition which prompted Abner to proclaim him king. Abner knew that, though David might not punish him for his share in the persecutions of David, he could not play such an important role at the court of David as at that of Ishbosheth who was a weakling. He also knew that if he extended Ishbosheth's kingdom he would gain in power and glory. In the next five and one-half years (5:5) he thus reconquered the northern territory west of the Jordan which had, in consequence of the battle in the valley of Jezreel, fallen into the hands of the Philistines (vv. 8-10). In this way Ishbosheth became, two years before his downfall, ruler of all Israel except Judah. David does not seem in any way to have interfered with Abner. He wished to avoid any form of fratricide or of civil war (2:27). No doubt, he trusted that God would, in His time, give him the entire kingdom of Israel as He had given him the land of Judah. Not until Abner crossed the Jordan and collected his forces at Gibeon (north of Jerusalem), with the intention, it seems, to subdue the tribe of Judah, did David dispatch his general Joab (son of his sister Zeruiah) to intercept Abner (vv. 12-13). As the opposing forces met, they decided, at the suggestion of Abner, to stage a mock battle (v. 14), but the warriors entered the contest with such fury that each one of the twelve men seized his antagonist by the head and sheathed his sword in his body, so that they were all killed upon the spot, and the mock battle was turned into a regular conflict in which Abner and his men were routed. After great losses, Abner himself begged Joab to stop the slaughter of his brethren. Joab hearkened to the request of Abner, but he pointed out that Abner himself was responsible for this bloodshed (2:14-32). Only one scene out of this strife is brought to our attention; namely, that dealing with the murder of Joab's brother Asahel (vv. 18-25). This incident is mentioned because of its importance for the future development of David's reign (3:22-29). For this same reason, the fact is emphasized that Abner tried to spare the young, overly zealous,

hero because of his love and esteem for his former friend Joab. He advised the young man to try his skill, not on him, an experienced and tried general, but on a common warrior (vv. 20—23).

In the following battles between David and the house of Saul, David remained the victor. Like the heathen kings about him, however, he succumbed more and more to the sensuous practices of **polygamy**,—practices which, in his case, were absolutely prohibited (Deut. 17:17), and which were destined to cause him much sorrow and his nation much internal strife. We need only remind of the names of Amnon (cf. 3:2 and 13:1 ff.), Absalom (3:3 and 13:1—18:32), and Adonijah (cf. 3:4 and 1 Kings 1:1 ff.). Since Abner's treachery Ishbosheth's power waned more and more (3:6—11). By questioning Abner, Ishbosheth wounded his pride. Perhaps Abner had also recognized that he could not conquer David, thus he resolved to offer his services to David (12—13). Realizing that with Abner's help he should soon subdue all Israel, David greeted his offer with delight, and entered into an agreement with him. His sole condition was the return of Michal, his former wife, whom Saul had taken from him. Abner himself now sought to line up the other tribes on the side of David. The only tribe which would not consent to acknowledge David was that of Benjamin, the tribe of Saul and Ishbosheth. But at last after numerous negotiations, perhaps after special reference to the fact that Michal, Saul's daughter, had been received by David, also this tribe accepted David as king. In this way David gained the various tribes without further warfare or bloodshed (3:14—21). How great must have been his joy! But David had made the agreement in the absence of **Joab**, his general, who at the time was on a foreign expedition. When Joab returned, he was deeply displeased, and reproached the king most severely that he had let a treacherous man like Abner gain his confidence. It was not so much distrust, however, as it was fear that his influence at the court would be superseded by that of Abner, which caused him to take the stand he did. He even so far forgot himself that he dissembled friendship and treacherously assassinated the unsuspecting Abner (3:22—27). After the dastardly deed, he tried to justify himself by referring to the death of his brother Asahel by the hand of Abner. He desired to say that he had merely observed the custom of blood-feud or blood revenge (Ex. 21:12—14; Numbers 35:9—34; Deut. 19:1—13. cf. 2 Kings 14). But we know that Abner tried to save Asahel from death, though he owed him no grace or mercy, since they were engaged in war. When David heard of Joab's deed, his resentment was very great. He buried the fallen

hero with public honors, and swore in the presence of all the people that he was innocent of the crime, and invoked the wrath of God upon Joab because he himself was powerless adequately to deal with the powerful son of Zeruiah. David felt real horror over the act of Joab. And he deemed it wise, in view of the tribes which had been faithful to Abner and Ishbosheth, to give vent to his feelings in the strongest terms. Otherwise the tribes might conclude that he and Joab had secretly plotted to kill Abner, and the union of the tribes might again be jeopardized. But the people were persuaded of David's innocence (3:29-39). With Abner's death, Ishbosheth's resistance was ended, for he felt that the right arm of his kingdom's strength had been broken. Two of his own officers assassinated him, expecting by this act to deserve high rewards and honors from the king of Judah. But their expectations were not realized. David commanded his attendants to remove them to an ignominious death. He did not wish to appear a partner of their crime (4:2-12), which he abhorred. His wisdom as a statesman also told him any attempt to sanction their deed might endanger the union of the tribes.

In this way, his way to the throne of a united Israel was opened. Joab doubtlessly committed a great wrong, but David in no wise offended. That Abner and Ishbosheth perished was due to God's judgment, for they knew that God had appointed David king. From selfish motives they had taken position against him. In doing this, they had taken position against God, and incurred His wrath. One thing we may again learn here; namely this, that the sins of man can not thwart God's plans; God rather utilizes them in order to attain His divine will.

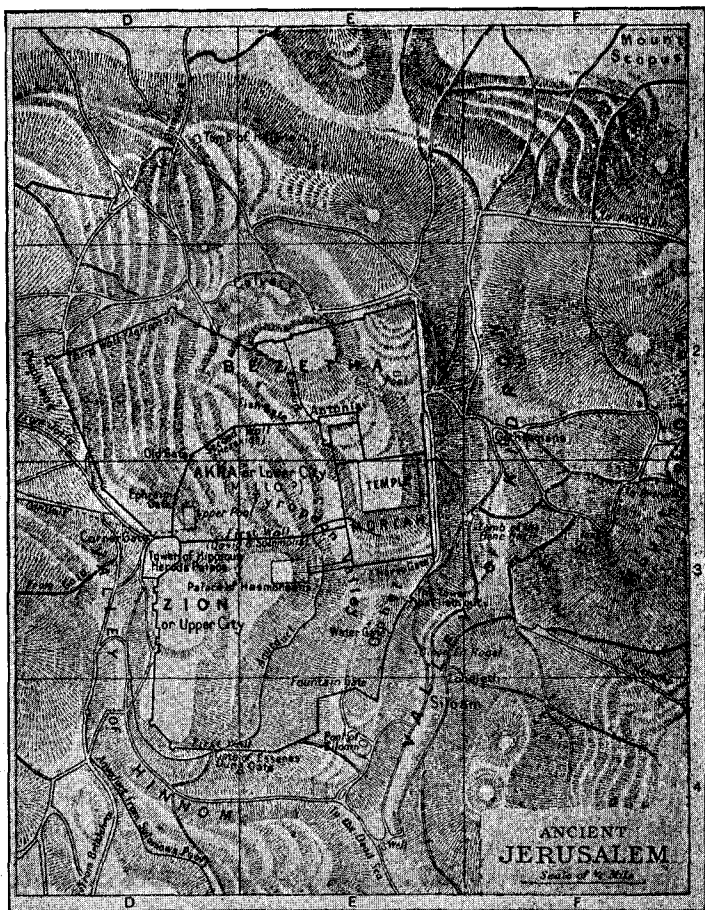
Questions:—1. Into how many parts may the Second Book of Samuel be divided?—2. Mention the subject matter of the various parts (cf. p. 245 f.).—3. How many chapters does the first part include?—4. What do we learn from the fact that David punished the Amalekite who had boasted of having killed Saul?—5. In what way does David show his sentiments regarding the luckless outcome of the battle in the valley of Jezreel?—6. Why was this elegy called the "bow"?—7. What do you remember regarding its contents?—8. What is noteworthy about the sentiments expressed in the poem?—9. What may we learn from David's estimate of Saul?—10. What could one expect now since Saul was dead?—11. Show how David conducted himself during this time.—12. What happened without David's help?—13. How do you look upon David's sending of the messengers to Jabesh?—14. How did David conduct himself when the district east of the Jordan recognized Ishbosheth as king, and when Abner re-captured the northern territory west of the Jor-

dan from the Philistines?—15. Only when did David dispatch his men to the northern boundaries of Judah?—16. Explain how the mock battle turned into a regular conflict.—17. Who lost the conflict?—18. Which scene from this battle is brought to our attention?—19. Why this scene?—20. What do you remember regarding the strife which follows between David and the house of Saul?—21. Which sin of David is especially noticeable during this time?—22. Why should he, since becoming king, have kept aloof from polygamy?—23. In which three ways did he later have to suffer for this sin?—24. How did Abner show that he desired Ishbosheth on the throne only because of himself?—25. To what did his offended dignity now lead him?—26. Why, do you suppose, did David ask Abner for Michal?—27. How did Abner show that he was sincere in his agreement with David?—28. With what success did Abner deal with the tribes which had followed him and Ishbosheth?—29. Who was to blame that the work which had been done was jeopardized, and that David's happiness was turned to sorrow?—30. Why could Joab not appeal to the custom of blood revenge in defense of himself?—31. What did David do to convince the people that he was innocent of Abner's death?—32. Why was it important that he did this?—33. How did he punish the assassins of Ishbosheth?—34. To what must Abner's and Ishbosheth's death be ascribed?—35. What was their sin?—36. What may we again learn from these four chapters which are so replete with man's sin?

2. David rules over all Israel with great power and glory, Chapters 5—9. Compare 1 Chron. 11—29. Read 2 Samuel 5:1—12; 6:1—23; 7:1—29; 8:1—18.

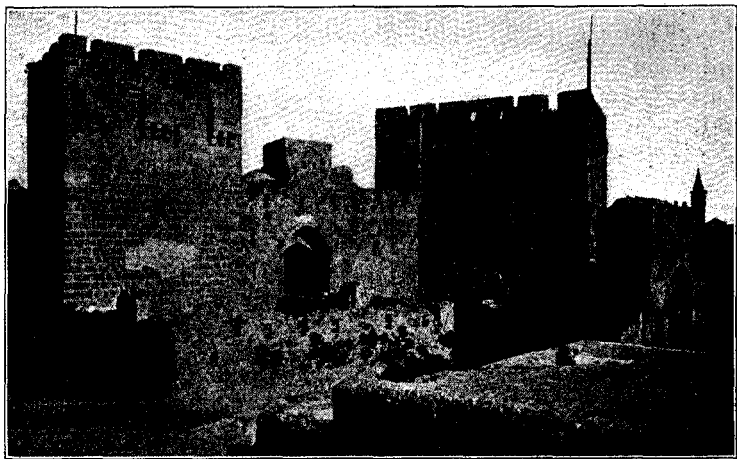
At last, when Abner and Ishbosheth had perished, the hour had struck when, according to God's will, David should ascend the throne of a re-united Israel. David had not attempted to take the throne by force. He had abided God's time. And He who sways the destiny of men now swayed the hearts of the tribes which had sworn allegiance to Abner and Ishbosheth that their leaders appeared before David at Hebron and invited him to assume the general government of the nation. Though they had been engaged in a civil war, they now felt that they were and should be one people (5:1); they remembered that, even in the days of king Saul, David had been their champion in battle (1 Sam. 18:5); they now realized that God Himself had appointed David to be their judge and king. In opposing David, they would be found opposing God (5:2). These thoughts prompted them to seek David. Thus a new day was breaking. Everything was prepared for David's anointment as king over all Israel. Having entered into an agreement with the Northern and the Eastern tribes, and having assumed the obligations of the royal office, he

was made king in the presence of the rulers and of the warriors of Israel (5:3). A more detailed account of the inauguration service is found in 1 Chron. 12:23-40.



Verses four and five are inserted to tell the length of David's reign. David ruled seven years at Hebron over Judah and thirty-three years at Jerusalem over the entire nation. In 5:6-10 we find

an account of David's first act as king. With his usual statesman-like vision, he soon recognized that Hebron lay too far south to be of great value as Israel's capital. Thus he cast about for a new place, better situated and better protected. He found such a place in **Jerusalem**, lying farther north in the tribe of Benjamin, which was well protected by numerous natural hills and ravines. Situated on a high plateau which rises some 2230—2260 feet in height and enclosed on three sides by a natural fosse of deep valleys,—on the north by the valley of Dschos, on the south by the valley of Hinnom, and on the east by the valley of Kidron, it was capable of being strongly fortified. Because of its precipitous sides, the site could be approached



The so-called David's Tower at Jerusalem.

only from the west. The plateau itself, terminating in an eminence some 125 feet in height, was again cleft by a deep ravine into two long, broken hills, the one on the east, the other on the west. The Eastern hill, or ridge, was originally split by a narrow chasm which extended from the "Valley of the Cheesemongers," also called the Tyropoeon, to the Valley of Kidron. Thus the plateau comprised three distinct hills, or ridges, which made the place impregnable; even though an enemy might gain an entrance from the west. Of the three hills, the one to the southeast was the most difficult of ascent, for, though the smallest, it was surrounded on all four sides by a

trench of deep, precipitous valleys. On the east, we find the Valley of Kidron, on the south, the Valley of Hinnom, on the west, the Tyropoeon, and on the north, the steep walls of the ravine which led from the Tyropoeon to the Valley of Kidron. An ever-flowing spring, or fountain, which supplied the hill with fresh water, made the site still more valuable.

In days gone by, the Canaanitish tribe of the Jebusites had settled on the hill and had retained their hold up to the time of David (Joshua 15:16; Judges 1:8, 21). The Jebusites ridiculed David's attempt to capture their stronghold. They felt certain that, though he might gain the lower table-land, he would never gain access to their hold, for he would not be able to scale the pre-eminence on which they had their fortress. In order to show their disdain, they placed their lame and blind on the walls as fully sufficient to keep David out (v. 6). But, having gained the lower section, David captured the fortress, and called the site Mount Zion, or the City of David (5:6—7*). Thus he won a new capital for his kingdom, which though still somewhat remote from the Northern tribes, offered easy access to the lands lying to the north and to those lying to the east of the Jordan. Later David fortified the site, and made the natural stronghold still more impregnable (v. 9).

The capture of Jerusalem was not the last of David's great deeds. It was rather only the beginning. From now on, he won fresh laurels and greater honors, for Jahve, the faithful God of the Covenant, who is also the Lord of Sabaoth, that is, the Lord of Hosts, was with him (v. 10). His influence was soon felt outside of the bounds of his own realm, so that **Hiram**, king of Tyre, welcomed the opportunity of forming an alliance with him, and of supplying him with cedar wood from Mount Lebanon and with trained workmen who might erect a royal palace at Jerusalem. In one respect, however, David was still found wanting. Like the heathen

* (Note to v. 8).—Verse 8, which is difficult of construction, refers to some word spoken by David as he was about to capture the stronghold of the Jebusites. It should be rendered somewhat as follows: Everyone who slays a Jebusite shall throw him from the gutter (edge of the precipice), whether he be lame or blind, for "they are hated of David's soul." The word is probably an appeal to destroy the proud Jebusites, whom David in derisive reference to v. 6 calls lame and blind. This figurative use of "lame and blind" in place of Jebusites gave rise to the popular expression: "Let not the lame or the blind enter into your house;" that is, let no enemy who is as arrogant as the Jebusites find entrance to your stronghold; rather let him perish like the Jebusite.

kings about him, he became ever more and more a victim of polygamy (5:11—16).

In another respect, though, he ever remained truly great. Regardless of his growing glory and power, he never lost sight of the fact that God was blessing him, not because of his own merits, but because of "His people Israel's sake" (v. 12), with whom He had made a covenant at Mount Sinai (compare 1 Chron. 11 and 12, also 14:1—7).

But how did the **Philistines**, the arch-enemies of Israel, regard Israel's rise in power and glory? 2:17—25 gives us the answer. Twice they entered the field against David, but each time David defeated them after having sought counsel of the Lord. The second time God Himself was present in the rustling of the mulberry trees, and directed the conflict (v. 24).

In making Jerusalem his new capital, David had also made it the political and national metropolis of the entire nation. Chapter 6 shows how it became the **religious center** of the people. For David was not only a brave warrior who could contend victoriously with the Jebusites and the Philistines; he was not only a wise statesman who worked for the best interests of his people; he was before all a devout man who felt the necessity of God's gracious and beneficent presence and who had no greater desire than that his people might learn to worship God as the laws demanded. In order to make this worship possible, he decided, after having gained the approbation of the rulers and warriors (1 Chron. 13), to remove the Ark of the Covenant from its obscure resting-place at Kirjath-Jearim to Jerusalem. The Ark was removed upon a new cart, drawn by oxen, and attended by a festive throng of priests, Levites, and people. However, the irregularity of the removal, especially the sacrilege of Uzzah (Numbers 4:15, 20) who was struck dead for putting forth his hand to stay the fall of the Ark, caused David, for the time being, to relinquish his intention. Since the Ark was to be placed in the center of Israel's life and worship, God desired, through the punishment of Uzzah, to show that His symbol was not to be desecrated by profane hands; that His commandments were to be punctiliously observed; and that He needed no human interference to protect His sanctuary. David perceived God's meaning. Frightened at his own sinfulness, he left the Ark in the house of a Levite named Obed-edom (6:1—10). But about three months later, hearing that the blessing of God had very evidently rested on the house of Obed-edom and realizing that the Ark was a symbol not only of God's holiness, but also

of His grace and mercy, he mustered courage and hastened to complete his design. Once more the festive throng accompanied the Ark, which was now carried, as prescribed in God's Word, by the Levites (1 Chron. 15:15). David himself laid aside his royal mantle, and "danced" before the Ark of the Lord; that is, with rhythmic movements of hands and body he kept time to the joyful sounds of



David, the Psalm Singer.

the music, and led the way before the Ark. When the procession had started (gone 6 paces), sacrifices were offered (v. 13); when the procession reached its destination, sacrifices were offered once more (1 Chron. 15:26).

A costly tent, or tabernacle, had been prepared for the Ark in the city. The old tabernacle, it appears, was still at Gibeon, under the supervision of Zadok, the high priest.—2 Sam. 20:25; 1 Chron. 16:39ff.; 2 Chron. 1:3. Numerous sacrifices, rich offerings, and gifts to the people marked the close of the festivity (6:12—19).

Michal, the daughter of Saul, could not understand David's joy

over the removal of the Ark. She reproached him for having acted so far beneath what she conceived to be the dignity of the king of Israel. She had called the short garb, the ephod of the priest, in which David had clad himself, "a shamelessly uncovering of himself." But David's reply to her was proper and spirited (21). God punished the arrogance of Michal by causing her to be childless (23). 1 Chron. 15:16; 23—26 shows how David arranged the religious services attendant upon the Ark and its tabernacle, and how he ordered the work of the priests, Levites, and singers.

Questions:—1. Into how many parts may the Second Book of Samuel be divided?—2. Mention the contents of the first part of the book!—3. Of the second part!—4. Mention the three reasons which prompted the tribes which had sworn allegiance to Abner and Ishbosheth to come to David at Hebron!—5. Show that it was God alone who made David king over all Israel!—6. How many years did David rule over Judah?—7. How many years over all Israel at Jerusalem?—8. Why did David wish to change the capital from Hebron to Jerusalem?—9. Describe the location of Jerusalem, and show that it was well protected!—10. Locate the fortress which David desired to capture!—11. Explain 5:8!—12. Show that David stood in great honor by the neighboring kings!—13. What sin did David practice at Jerusalem even more than at Hebron?—14. In what respect, however, did he remain truly great?—15. Which enemy of Israel felt his powerful arm before others?—16. How did David plan to make Jerusalem the religious center of his nation?—17. Explain why he at first relinquished his design!—18. Describe Uzzah's sin!—19. Tell why David later brought the Ark to Jerusalem!—20. How do you understand the term, "David danced before the Lord?"—21. Why did Michal take exception to David's dancing?—22. Which Book of the Bible gives us detailed information regarding the religious services at Jerusalem?—23. Mention the most important things pertaining to these services!

Chapter Seven of the Second Book of Samuel shows us **David in the days of his greatest glory**,—those days when he received that singularly glorious promise, which, looking backward, recalled the word of Jacob (Gen. 49:10), the blessing vouchsafed Abraham (Gen. 12:3), and the prophecy given our first parents (Gen. 3:15), and which looking forward, pointing to the coming of Christ,—a promise which revealed God's salvation as coming from David and his race. Whosoever would ascertain David's importance in God's plan of salvation must study this chapter, for in it God Himself speaks through His prophet. The promise was given David (vv. 5—16) because of his desire to build the Lord a temple, his own palace al-

ready having been built (7:1—2). He felt it improper that he should live in a house of cedar, whereas the Lord was abiding in a tabernacle made of curtains (6:17). Undoubtedly, David's motives were good. He who loves God will see that God's house is made deserving of God. For this reason we can also understand Nathan's reply (v. 3). But in the Old Testament dispensation things were different. Only when the development of the people had reached that stage when a stable temple would be warranted could a house be built for the Lord. God alone knew when this time would come. Thus God appeared unto Nathan in a dream, and advised him that He could not approve David's plan. The message which Nathan brought to David reads somewhat as follows: **"Not YOU shall build ME a house; but I will build YOU a house, a house which shall obtain forever** (cf. v. 5 and v. 11). In detail, Nathan reminded David that until now God had lived among His people in a tabernacle; and that no leader, or ruler, had ever been instructed to build a temple. As long as His people had been wandering in the desert; as long as they were without peace, as under Joshua and the Judges, and even under Samuel and Saul: so long God desired to live among them in a movable tent. Nothing had been overlooked, if men had as yet built no temple. Now, it is true, the country was at peace, but the conflict with the enemies was not ended. Many battles were still to be fought before all would be quiet (7:5—10). When the time of peace would arrive, God would appoint someone to erect a temple (1 Chron. 28:3; 22:8). Not David, but God would build a house,—a house, not of stone and of wood, but the house of His grace which should abide forever. The disaster which had visited Saul's house would not visit David. He would have a successor whose kingdom would be established and who would build God a temple. As a father regards his son, so God would regard David's successor. And, though he should fail in obedience, he should not perish, but should be corrected, and his kingdom should not fail (7:11—16). This was indeed a great promise. But God saw to its fulfillment. Solomon followed David as king. Though he sinned grievously, his kingdom was not taken from him; though the kingdom was divided, his successors retained the more important part; and though Israel at length languished in Babylonian captivity, oppressed by foreign rulers, God remembered His promise, and sent the Lord Jesus Christ, heralded by the angels of God as the true son of David (Luke 1:30—33), to consummate the words which He had spoken to David. While Solomon erected a visible temple of stone and of wood, Christ honored

God's name by building a new structure; namely, by building the Church, the congregation of believers. This is today the new house, the new temple of God (Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Cor. 3:16). This house shall abide forever, and even the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matt. 16:18). By this promise which finds its final fulfillment in Christ and His kingdom, God tied His plan of salvation to the house of David. For this reason, we hold that God conferred His greatest glory on David when He gave him this promise. Little wonder that David gave vent to his feelings in a song of praise and thanksgiving. The greater God's grace, the greater his own sense of unworthiness. He sings: "Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house that Thou hast brought me hitherto (7:17-21)?" The glorious future which the Lord here promised to Israel was a fitting sequel to the wonderful deeds which He in the past had done for Israel's sake (7:22-24). David closed his prayer with the petition that God might breathe His blessing upon him and his race (7:25-29). Everywhere this prayer is filled with the spirit of trust and confidence. Compare 1 Chron. 17 with this section.

Chapters eight and nine give us a glimpse of the **external glory** of David's rule, and also of his generosity to the surviving members of Saul's house. In conquering the Philistines, the Moabites, various Syrian kings, and the Edomites, David's country received unheard of boundaries. It extended on the south to the Arabian Gulf (Aelanitic Gulf), on the north to Mt. Hermon, and on the north-east to Mt. Zalmon. Even the Syrians as far north as Damascus became subject to his rule and rendered tribute (8:1-14). According to 2 Sam. 10 he extended his boundaries, after having vanquished the Syrians and the Ammonites, to the very shores of the Euphrates on the east. The rich spoils which he took in his expeditions against Israel's enemies he consecrated to God (v. 11). Also **internally** David's kingdom was strengthened. He placed capable men at the heads of the various departments of government (8:15-18). Seraiah, who is mentioned in verse 17, was recorder, or secretary of state. The Cherethites and the Pelethites, mentioned in verse 17, comprised his bodyguard. His sons, says verse 18, were chief rulers, that is, they were his confidential advisers. Over and against all of his victories, however, David never forgot his vow to king Saul (1 Sam. 24:22) and his bosom friend Jonathan (1 Sam. 20:15). Now, when he had respite from war, he caused inquiry to be made whether any of Saul's family remained, "to whom he might show kindness" (9:1-13). Compare 1 Chron. 18 with this section.

Questions:—1. Which chapter of the Second Book of Samuel describes David in his greatest glory?—2. Why does the giving of the promise mark the height of his glory?—3. Of what importance was this promise to David?—4. When David had respite from war, what plan did he make?—5. How did Nathan regard this plan?—6. Why was his intention only natural and proper?—7. But why did God reject his plan?—8. In which verses does God give His reasons for rejecting David's plan?—9. Mention, in short, the promise which God gave David!—10. Explain the words: "I build you a house!"—11. How long should David's house be established?—12. Show how God kept His promise!—13. In whom did the promise find its final fulfillment?—14. Who has explicitly stated in the New Testament that Jesus was the son of David, therefore the fulfillment of the divine promise?—15. In what respect is Jesus the son of David?—16. Describe the kingdom founded by Christ which shall abide forever!—17. The history of whose family is thus interwoven with the development of God's plan of salvation?—18. What reply did David make upon receiving the promise?—19. Mention the boundaries of David's kingdom!—20. In spite of his bloody wars, how does David show his devout spirit?—21. How did he keep his vow made to Saul and Jonathan?

3. David commits a grievous crime, and sincerely repents of his sin, but must suffer the pangs of temporal punishment until his death. He subdues the Syrians as far as the Euphrates River, and compels them to render tribute. Chapters 10—20. Read 11:1—27; 12:1—14; 15:1—31; 18:1—17.

David's fall, mentioned in the third part of the Book of Samuel, was as profound as his rise, mentioned in the second part of the same Book, had been sublime. The third part tells of his adultery with Bathsheba, and his murder of Uriah; it points out what dreadful results followed for him and for his kingdom from his life of vice, especially from his sin of polygamy. In studying this part, we are impressed with the faithfulness of Scriptures which never pass over a wrong in silence, whether that wrong be committed by the rich or poor, the great or lowly. God's Word always calls a spade a spade, and a sin a sin. Should anyone take exception to its open treatment of man's sensual sins, let him remember that Scriptures aim to teach and to warn. They seek to bring home to us that these sins carry their own punishment in their wake, that we may be warned and may refrain from doing them. In the case of David, Scriptures record that he repented of his crime, and that God again received him into His grace, but that he had to bear the temporal punishment which this crime carried with it. David suffered punishment, not because God

was still angry with him, but because David himself should learn to loathe his sin, and again become a useful instrument of God.

David committed his heinous crime during the time of the Ammonitish-Syrian conflict (10:1—19). This conflict already touched upon chapter 8 (cf. 1 Chron. 19), is enlarged upon in chapter 10. It was the most bitter and most important of David's many warfares, for it involved the very existence of his kingdom. Caused by the ignominious treatment accorded David's ambassadors by the new king of the Ammonites, who caused the ambassadors' beards to be shaved and their long garments to be cut short at their buttocks, thereby exposing their bodies, since Oriental people wear no trousers, to public shame and ridicule, this conflict was one of the most bloody and perilous. The Ammonites formed an alliance with the Syrian king residing in northwestern Canaan. This king in turn called upon his allies east of the Euphrates River (10: 16). Thus David was constrained to protect his country on two sides (v. 9). In the terrible battle which ensued, the Israelites were victorious. They destroyed 700 chariots, 40,000 horses, and innumerable foot (2 Sam. 10:17; 8:4; 1 Chron. 18:4;—also here the numbers are unreliable because of various errors in copying; compare page 264). After their first onslaught, the Syrians fled. When the Ammonites saw this, they also fled, and hastened into their metropolitan city Rabbah. Because the rainy season had already set in, Joab decided not to besiege the city, but to return to Jerusalem. But when the year was expired; that is, when spring had come, and kings could renew their conflict, he went to subdue Rabbah. David, certain of victory, remained quiet at Jerusalem, where, in an unguarded hour, his inordinate desires brought him low (11:2—27), and made him a gross adulterer. From the commanding height of the roof of his palace, he unhappily caught a view of Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, who was bathing, with little regard for womanly chastity, in the open court of her house. The thought of God should have stifled David's evil desires, especially since she was the wife of another man who was, even at that moment, risking his life before Rabbah for him and his kingdom. But David never once thought of God or of Uriah. He thought only of satisfying his passions. Bathsheba lent a willing ear to his foul wishes, and thus David was brought low. How was it possible that he who had so often tasted God's blessings could disregard God's holy will? Small sins give rise to great ones, and insignificant desires give birth to giant passions if man neglects to watch and pray. David sinned because he was impelled by his inborn, naturally depraved heart

(Gen. 8: 21) and, before all, by the shameless polygamy which he had practiced more than ever since his accession to the throne. While in its clutches, he failed to recognize that the lusts of the flesh are sin, and he lost the power to battle with his lower nature. And as his outward pomp and glory grew, he lived more and more a life of carnal ease. Having nothing to occupy his thoughts, he invited temptation according to the proverb: "An idle brain is the devil's workshop." His conduct brings home to us the word of St. Paul (Gal. 5: 24; 1 Cor. 10: 20) and of Jesus (Matt. 26: 41.)

After the crime had been committed, only one thing could save David; namely, whole-hearted confession of his crime before God and before Uriah. His sense of shame and remorse and his knowledge that both he and Bathsheba should perish according to the letter of the law (Lev. 20: 10), should have driven him to confess and to repent. But, instead of fearing God's wrath and of publicly confessing his guilt, he thought only of concealing his wrong. Informed by Bathsheba that their crime would not be without grave consequences, he recalled Uriah from the field of battle, hoping his presence would screen the effects of their misdeeds, so that Uriah might appear the father of the expected child. But Uriah sorely disappointed him (11: 6—13). David then resolved that the life of Bathsheba and that his own character could be secured only by the death of Uriah. How well sin had him in its power! In concert with the unprincipled and all-too willing Joab, he contrived to murder Uriah. Joab executed the plan of death. But David was none the less responsible, for he had planned the deed. But even now David failed to recognize his wrong and to show any trace of remorse. On the contrary, after the days of mourning were expired, he openly took Bathsheba to wife; and she bore him a child. Satan had struck him with blindness, had corrupted his heart, and stifled the voice of his conscience. For nearly a year he remained impenitent. But the deed which he had done with so much privacy, thinking to escape human detection, "displeased God" (11: 27), whose righteousness demanded punishment and whose mercy desired to save.

Chapter 12: 1—14 shows how God dealt with David. Had the Lord not intervened, the fallen king would have perished in his sins. Divine grace, however, sought him out; it sent Nathan, the prophet, to reprove him and to awaken his slumbering conscience. Gradually the Lord worked out his salvation. First the child of Bathsheba should be born as a testimony of his guilt, that he might come to his senses, might lament and repent his wrong according to the

lines laid down by himself in Psalm 32:3—4. The prophet reproved the king with much tact. Fully aware that man is more prone to condemn the misdeeds of his neighbor than those of himself, he depicted a crime committed by an unknown Israelite. The tale worked so powerfully on David's feelings, for he still possessed a certain sense of justice, that his anger was kindled against the man "who had no pity," and that he pronounced the sentence of death upon him. Nathan then retorted: "Thou art the man" (7—9). The prophet upbraided him with his ingratitude and transgression, threatening that the sword which he had privily employed to cut off Uriah should never depart from his own house, and that his own wives should be publicly dishonored by his neighbor (11—12). Convicted and confounded, David's hardened heart was softened. He confessed: "I have sinned against the Lord." In a few words—the true sign of penitence, he, like the publican in the Gospel (Luke 18:13), confessed his guilt, trying, in no wise, to dissemble or to cloak, to excuse or to mitigate his wrong. He could now think of nothing except his great sin. In the 51st Psalm, which he composed on this occasion and which expresses in the most pathetic strains, the anguish of a wounded spirit and the bitterness of his penitence, he gives us an inkling of his extreme sorrow. As this Psalm shows, he recognized the true source of his sin; namely, his inborn, naturally depraved nature (Psalm 51:5). He recognized that, in giving his people a wicked example (51:18), he had sinned against his people. He now comprehended that he had wronged Bathsheba and Uriah, and, before all, his God (51:4). Because he thoroughly comprehended and lamented his sin, Nathan was permitted to proclaim divine forgiveness. God remitted the sentence of death which David had pronounced on himself, and transferred it to the fruit of his crime,—to the child of Bathsheba, especially since it might give occasion for the enemies of the Lord,*that is, the unbelievers in and outside of Israel, to ridicule the devout children of God as hypocrites and to blaspheme God Himself (14). Thus God still deals with us today. He forgives the penitent sinner and receives him into His grace, but He inflicts upon him the temporal punishments of his crime, that the sinner may learn to loathe his sins, to refrain from further evil, and to prove his faith in God by leading a virtuous life. In how far this was attained by David, we learn from 12:15—23, where the illness and death of Bathsheba's child is told, and from 12:24—35, where David, according to divine will, comforts and acknowledges his wife Bathsheba who bears him a son, whom David calls Solomon, i. e., the "peace-

ful," in memory of the divine peace to which he had attained and of the promise of peace which God had given him (7:11; Gen. 49:10). Here we also find that David committed his son Solomon to the training of Nathan, the man who had so sternly reproved him.

The capture of Rabbah (12:15—23) probably fell into the time of the great conflict mentioned in 11:1; that is, into the time after David had sinned, but before he had repented. This would, in part, explain the cruelty which was meted out to the captured Ammonites (12:31). An impenitent heart is usually harsh toward its enemies. But, however, that may be, the Ammonites certainly deserved harsh treatment. According to Amos 1:13, they had "ripped up" the body of every Israelitic woman with child, and according to 1 Sam. 11:2 had consented to make peace with the inhabitants of Jabesh only on one condition, that of "thrusting out" the right eye of every man of Jabesh.

Questions:—1. Mention the contents of the first, of the second, and of the third part of the Second Book of Samuel!—2. The fact that Scriptures tell us about the grievous fall of David proves what regarding Scriptures?—3. Why do Scriptures tell us about the sins of great men?—4. What do Scriptures also tell us regarding David?—5. During the time of what great conflict did David commit his sin?—6. Mention the cause of this conflict!—7. Why was this the most important of David's numerous warfares?—8. How did this conflict end?—9. Into which part of the Ammonitish-Syrian conflict does David's sin fall?—10. Which commandment did David first transgress?—11. Show how David came to do this sin!—12. Which other commandment did he then transgress?—13. Which admonition of Jesus and of His apostle does the sin of David bring home to us?—14. What does David fail to show after having become an adulterer?—15. What rather seemed to be his sole aim?—16. To what does he at last resort when he finds that all other attempts to hide his crime have been futile?—17. In what respect was Joab also guilty of David's sin?—18. How long did David persevere in the hardness of his heart?—19. How do you regard God's intervention?—20. How did Nathan fulfill his task?—21. Why did he broach the matter as he did?—22. In which word does Nathan sum up his reproof?—23. What punishment does he proclaim?—24. What effect did his stinging reproof have on David?—25. Show from the 51st Psalm that David's penitence was of right kind!—26. What answer did God give David through Nathan when David confessed his wrong?—27. What did the forgiveness of sins imply?—28. What, however, was not removed?—29. Why did God still inflict temporal punishment upon him?—30. Show from the following incidents that God attained His end!

In consequence of his sin with Bathsheba, the last years of David's reign were fraught with much anguish and strife, for the punishment which God had threatened upon David's house were not long withheld. His over-indulged and misguided sons, reared by their mothers in an atmosphere of jealousy and intrigue, had only one aim, mindful perhaps of their father's ignoble example; namely, that of satisfying their fleshly passions and of realizing their ambitious designs. Their wayward conduct gave rise to a series of terrible crimes which nearly cost David his life and his throne. **Amnon**, the eldest of his sons, was the first evil-doer. Conceiving a violent passion for his half-sister, Tamar, he effected her dishonor by force and then expelled her ignominiously from his house (13:1—20). David deeply resented Amnon's deed, but, failing to call him to account for his transgression (21), **Absalom**, the full brother of Tamar, avenged his sister's wrong by slaying Amnon (13:21—33). Absalom was forced to flee the country. He found refuge with his maternal grandfather, the king of Geshur, in Syria, with whom he remained for three years. Through the crafty intervention of Joab, however, he was permitted to return home (14:1—22). But David, desirous of showing that he disapproved his act, would not grant him permission to appear at court. Herein, however, David made a grave mistake. Half-hearted forgiveness can only work harm. Either he should not have suffered Absalom to return, or he should have permitted him to appear at court. Acting as he did, only embittered Absalom, so that he formed the design, conceived, perhaps, while he was an exile, of depriving his father of the throne. Being an exceedingly fine young man, admired by all Israel for his beauty, he was confident of winning the people to his side. In order better to realize his purpose, he cunningly contrived to gain an interview with Joab, who then sought to reconcile him with his father. When he appeared before his father, he fell upon his face according to Eastern custom, but he offered no apology, no plea for pardon. Without a word of reproof, David embraced him (14:23—33). Thus Absalom came to court, better prepared than ever to incite a revolt against his aged father. Perceiving that the people of Jerusalem were fond of pomp and display, Absalom began to live with great ostentation. He desired not only popularity, but, before all, the good will of the people. By insinuating that his father's judgments were biased and unjust and by promising greater justice if he were judge, he "stole the hearts of the people" from David (15:1—3). At last, four years (thus, without doubt, the number in verse seven originally read)

after his reconciliation with his father, he judged his plans ripe for execution. He called the revolution into being with great tact. Having gained the king's permission to go to his birth-place, Hebron, the old capital of Judah, under the pretence of offering there a sacrifice which he had vowed years before, he sent for his accomplice Ahithophel, the trusted friend and counsellor of David, who was already tarrying near Hebron. Two hundred men of Jerusalem, ignorant of his foul design, appeared publicly in his retinue as enemies of David. Numerous other men were dispersed among the tribes, who, when they heard the signal given by the sound of the trumpet, proclaimed him king. Surprised and confounded, the people, already fond of Absalom, received him with little or no opposition (15:1—12). Thus David's family was the cause of his own misfortunes (cf. 2 Sam. 7:11).

Alarmed at this formidable rebellion, David hastily took flight from Jerusalem. In order, perhaps, to test the faithfulness of his followers who might constitute the nucleus of a new army, he passed into the lands east of the Jordan. In abandoning Jerusalem to the rebels, he gained time and saved the city from the dangers and horrors of a regular siege. Probably he also hoped that, after the first wave of excitement should have spent its course, many might come to their senses, might re-consider their rash deed, and re-new their allegiance to him. Barefoot, and with head covered, he crossed the Kidron brook, by the ascent of Mount Olivet,—a type, indeed, of his greater Son in later years (John 18:1), on Whom, like on David, the reproving hand of God should rest, not because of His own sins, as here with the king of Israel, but because of the sins of the world. Yet David was not altogether forsaken. His faithful counsellors, his body-guard (the Cherethites and Pelethites, verse 18), as well as six hundred Gittites, and priests and Levites, and the worthy friend Ittai, were ready to attend him. The priests and Levites even brought the ark with them, but David would not have the holy symbol implicated in his fall. He, therefore, instructed the priests and Levites to return with it into the city. He thought that reliable friends in the city might render him great service by secretly transmitting intelligence and advice. For the same reason he also begged Hushai, the counsellor, to join himself to Absalom, where he might thwart the counsel of Ahithophel. In this way David was able to plant the seeds of disintegration in the very camp of the rebels (15:13—37). Verses 25 and 26 show us how David felt at this time.

Many noteworthy incidents occurred during the king's flight. **Ziba**, the steward of Mephibosheth, who brought some necessary refreshments, cajoled the fleeing king into believing that Mephibosheth had turned traitor. **Shimei**, a cowardly relative of Saul, dared to throw stones at him, accompanied by the grossest abuse. But all these afflictions David bore with patience and meekness. He saw in them, even in the insults of Shimei, the judgment of God. For this reason he would not let Abishai punish the foul-mouthed slanderer, but rather remarked: "Let him alone, and let him curse; for Jehovah hath bidden him" (10). Not that God had placed these foul insults in Shimei's heart or on his lips, but that He had, at this time and place, permitted Shimei, out of his own wicked heart, to heap reproach and insults upon him (16:5—14). Absalom hastened to Jerusalem. He was gratified to find Hushai there, the old friend of his father. Hushai soon gained his confidence. Though the old counsellor's words were highly ambiguous, and really amounted to a condemnation of Absalom, the young man saw in them only expressions of praise and not of condemnation (18—19). Whom God would destroy he first makes blind. At first the voice of Ahithophel was paramount and decisive in the council, for his reputation for wisdom in Jerusalem was respected as that of an oracle. The wicked source of his wisdom, however, became apparent when he advised Absalom, by an act as shameless as imaginable (17:21—22), to sever all connections with his father and to make a reconciliation impossible. But afterwards God Himself interposed (17:14) so that the counsel of Hushai was preferred to that of Ahithophel (17:1—14). In order to enable David to gain the lands east of the Jordan, to muster new strength, and to prepare for the impending battle, Hushai advocated delay in following up the victory. Through two trustworthy priests, Hushai apprised David of his advice to Absalom (17:15—21). David had established himself at the town of Mahanaim, east of the Jordan. The far-seeing Ahithophel deemed the cause of Absalom to be lost. Fearing punishment, he hanged himself (17:22—23). While at Mahanaim, David found that he still had many reliable friends among the people (17:24—29).

Absalom now collected his forces, crossed the Jordan, and encamped in the land of Gilead (17:26). A few minor skirmishes resulted. The decisive action was fought in the forest of Ephraim, west of the Jordan. Here the rebel army was defeated and **Absalom** was killed by Joab, notwithstanding the aged king's plea to respect the life of his son (5). He who had reared for himself a noble

sepulchre "in the king's dale" near Jerusalem to keep his name in remembrance was cast into a large pit and covered with a heap of stones,—a monument of shame, as it were, and a solemn warning for all times to all who step under foot the fourth commandment (18:1—18). Fleet messengers brought the tidings of victory to David (18:19—32). David, however, thought only of Absalom (18:29, 32). Oblivious to all things, he wailed incessantly over his son's death, thereby estranging his people who had ventured their lives for him. Serious consequences might have arisen from his excessive sorrow, had not Joab reproved him (19:1—19). David grieved not so much because Joab had been disobedient to his command "to deal gently" with the prince and because Absalom had been ignominiously buried, but rather because he recognized that he himself, through wrong training and bad example, had been largely to blame for his son's defection and death. 16:21—22 is a verbal fulfillment of 12:11. On this occasion we also note David's fondness for Absalom,—a fondness which seemed to rob him of his sense of duty after Absalom's death. For some time, the aged king seemed unable to collect himself. We note this, not so much in his appeal to the tribe of Judah to recall him to Jerusalem (19:11—13) as in his attempts to gain over Amasa by the offer to make him captain of the host in place of Joab (19:14), and in his treatment of Shimei, the vulgar sycophant (19:17—24), and of Mephibosheth, who was forced to divide his property with the treacherous Ziba (19:25—31). Only in his relation to the aged Barzillai (cf. 17:21) does he appear natural (19:32—40). As David crossed the Jordan, a quarrel broke out between Judah and the other tribes, provoked, perhaps, in part by David's appeal to Judah. The quarrel grew so hot that but a slight impulse was wanting to induce the northern tribes to leave David to his tribe of Judah (19:41—44). This impulse was supplied by one Sheba, whose cry: "We have no part in David" (20:1), caused the others to secede. Judah remained faithful to David, pursued and slew Sheba, and crushed the rebellion. On this occasion Joab treacherously slew Amasa who had supplanted him in command just as at a former time he had slain Abner. David dared not deprive Joab of his station again, but he always remembered his misdeeds, as 1 Kings 2:5 shows (20:1—26).

Questions:—1. Characterize the last years of David's reign!

—2. Why were these years fraught with much strife and anguish?

—3. How had David himself laid the foundation to this time

of vice and strife?—4. Who was the first evil-doer?—5. How

did Absalom become entangled in the iniquity of the time?—6. To what place did Absalom flee?—7. Who intervened for Absalom so that he could return to Jerusalem?—8. What grave mistake did David make in dealing with Absalom?—9. What plan did Absalom pursue at this time?—10. How did he seek to realize his plan?—11. In what way did he gain the people?—12. How did he begin the revolution?—13. Which word of Nathan was fulfilled at this time?—14. Why did David deem it best to flee from Jerusalem?—15. Of whom was David a type as he crossed the Kidron brook?—16. Explain that from the very beginning David planted seeds of disintegration in the very camp of the rebels!—17. Explain the word which David spoke in defense of Shimei!—18. How did Absalom receive Hushai?—19. How must Hushai's words to Absalom be understood?—20. But how did Absalom understand his words?—21. Who was Absalom's prime counsellor?—22. What advice did Ahithophel give Absalom?—23. What counsel did Hushai offer?—24. Why was Hushai's counsel favorable to David, but fatal to Absalom?—25. Of what value to David were the priests and Levites at Jerusalem at this time?—26. Why did Ahithophel hang himself when he saw that Hushai's advice was preferred to his?—27. Where had David established himself?—28. Where was the decisive battle between the forces of David and of Absalom fought?—29. Why did Joab slay Absalom regardless of David's command?—30. How did David receive the tidings of Absalom's death?—31. Who saved him when in danger of estranging himself from his people?—32. How do you view David's extreme sorrow?—33. From what other incidents do you note that David had not been able to collect himself?—34. What provoked the quarrel between Judah and the North and the East tribes?—35. Who caused the northern tribes to secede?—36. Which tribe remained faithful to David?—37. In what way did Joab gain the northern tribes for David again?—38. What foul deed was Joab again guilty of as in the days of Abner?—39. Why did David not punish Joab as he deserved to be punished?

Chapters 21—24 **supplement** the Second Book of Samuel. They give us various pictures out of the life of David. We mention his wonderful song of praise, found also in the 18th Psalm, wherein he gratefully thanks God for his deliverance from the hands of his enemies (22:1—5), and "his last words" (23:1—7), wherein we see that all his thoughts centered on the great promise which God had given him (2 Sam. 7). Before his mind's eye, the true descendant of his house, the righteous ruler, who should reign in the fear of the Lord, ever passed in review. As the bright-eyed sun awakens the slumbering flowers after the night's refreshing rain, so His coming should awaken and bring blessings to the godly, while the wicked, resembling the thorny hedges, should be plucked and cast into the

fire.—The 24th chapter is of special interest as it records **“the numbering of the people.”** Undoubtedly, the census falls into the last year of David’s reign. The people had sinned against the Lord: how, is not stated. But we need only remind ourselves that they had twice turned traitor to the king selected for them by God Himself,—sufficient reason for the Lord’s being angry with them. His anger was made manifest when He incited David to undertake a census, an undertaking which was destined to cause much sorrow and distress. In 1 Chron. 21:1 we read that “Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel,” but this passage is not in opposition to 24:1, since Satan was only the instrument through which God in His wrath acted upon David. But can God really incite anyone to a deed which God Himself regards and punishes as wicked? Does this not seem to show that God incites us to do evil things? No, God never tempts His children to do things which are wrong (James 1:13), but He does tempt the sinner who cherishes and fondles his sins. By inciting the evil lust dwelling in man, God causes the indwelling sins to become visible and known that the sinner, alarmed at his sinful state, may call a halt, may retrace his steps, and turn to God for forgiveness and mercy. At this time, David’s heart was again filled with vain and reprehensible thoughts. Having crushed both Absalom’s and Sheba’s rebellion, he had fallen into a life of carnal security. Prosperity prompted the proud thought: “Now I have my enemies kneeling at my feet. I possess a large and powerful army. It is my rock and my fortress. None of the neighboring tribes dare assail me; and though they should rise up against me, I am their equal.” But such carnal thoughts are offensive to God, who had been David’s rock and fortress. David should learn that, not his army, but the Lord, was his protection. Once for all, he should be cured of his proud sense of security. God incited him to enumerate his people since an enumeration would flatter his sense of safety. The measure, however, was abhorrent to the Israelites, even Joab resented it and gave it all the opposition in his power. When he found that the king adhered to his purpose, he reluctantly undertook the census. That he, the commander-in-chief, should take the census sufficiently indicates the military object of the undertaking. Joab began in the southern section of the East-Jordan lands. Passing through to the northern boundaries of the country, he crossed the Jordan and began counting from the north to the south of the land. The return of the adult male population was 800,000 men in the northern and eastern tribes, and 500,000 in the

tribe of Judah alone. The entire population of Israel, at this rate, could not well have been less than 5,000,000. Since Palestine is not much larger than our state of Maryland, and since large cities were altogether wanting, we may assume a dense population. Hardly had the task been completed, when David's slumbering conscience awoke, and he saw that he had acted unwisely and even ungodly. With great humility he submitted to God's chastisement. A threefold choice of punishment was offered him: famine, pestilence, and persecution by his enemies. All three forms of punishment were destined to correct the people and to teach David the folly of relying on his arms. Knowing how devoid of mercy men may be, the king fixed on the alternative "of falling into the hands of the Lord" with whom there is mercy. The Lord answered David's choice by sending a destructive plague, capable, indeed, of teaching the vanity of human life and strength. For three days it raged, destroying 70,000 men. The plague was stayed before the gates of Jerusalem, where David interceded for his people: "I have done wickedly, but these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray Thee, be against me and against my father's house" (17), and where he erected an altar, upon the advice of Gad, and offered sacrifices on that spot of ground where he had seen the destroying angel stand (cf. Ex. 12). David's noble prayer was granted as soon as it was uttered. The pestilence abated, and both king and people embraced its lesson.—The place of sacrifice, the threshing floor of Araunah, later became an important spot in God's plan of salvation. David had said (1 Chron. 22: 1): "Here the house of God shall be; here, the altar of the burnt offering for Israel." And, in truth, the temple was later built on this spot, and the sacrifices, offered up within the temple, rose up before God calling for mercy, and God responded by granting forgiveness and staying the punishments, until the true Son of David, the divine mediator between God and man, appeared, took upon Himself man's sins, and said to God: "Let Me bear man's punishments; let man go free" (cf. 17).—Through the sacrifice of His precious life on Mt. Golgotha, the punishment which God should exact of us is, for all times, borne by Him. We, one and all, are free. Thus the history of David ends, calling our attention to the great work of David's great Son, and to the importance of David's life for the further development of God's plan of salvation.

Questions for Review: 1. How must we regard chapters 21—24?—2. Why should they be regarded as an appendix, or supplement?—3. Into what time does the event of 21:1—14

fall?—4. Mention other passages whose events antedate the revolt of Sheba!—5. Which passage is of special interest?—6. What makes David's song of praise so noteworthy?—7. Why are David's "last words" important?—8. When was the census taken?—9. Why did God permit the census?—10. Explain the apparent contradiction between the account of 2 Sam. 24:1 and that of 1 Chron. 21:1.—11. When can we say that God incites people to deeds of wickedness?—12. When can we never say this?—13. What is God's purpose when He incites men to evil things?—14. Mention the sin which was dwelling in David's heart at this time, and which should manifest itself, and be subdued?—15. Through what plan of David's did this sin become manifest?—16. Characterize the census which David planned.—17. When did David recognize that he had done wrong in counting the people?—18. Mention the returns of the census.—19. How did he receive his punishment?—20. Why did he desire to fall into the hand of God rather than into that of his fellowmen?—21. How many perished from the plague?—22. What saved Jerusalem from the plague?—23. What twofold purpose did God pursue in sending the plague?—24. In what way did the place of sacrifice, the floor of Araunah, become important in God's plan of salvation?—25. In what respect does this story show David as a type of his great Son, in Whom all promises regarding man's salvation should find their fulfillment?

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It is impossible to state with certainty who wrote the two books of Samuel since the books themselves give us no clew whatever. According to Jewish traditions, Samuel is author of that part which reaches to his death, while the remainder was written by Nathan and Gad, the prophets. That they are based on records made by eye-witnesses follows from the lucidity, vividness and accuracy of the narratives, and according to 1 Chron. 29:29, we have every reason to believe that the greatest part of these books is based on records made by Samuel, Nathan, and Gad. Besides the book of Jasher (i. e., of the upright, 2 Sam. 1:18) may have been perused. The books were not cast into the form in which we have them, until after the death of Solomon (1 Sam. 27:6), otherwise it surely would have been unnecessary to explain expressions current in the times of Saul and David, as in 1 Sam. 9:9 and 2 Sam. 13:18. Here, too, 2 Tim. 3:16, 17 is decisive for us.

(End of first part.)